DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 482 424 UD 035 950

AUTHOR	Yeakey, Carol Camp, Ed.; Henderson, Ronald D., Ed.
TITLE	Surmounting All Odds: Education, Opportunity, and Society in the New Millennium. Volume 2. A Volume in Research on African American Education.
ISBN	ISBN-1-931576-26-2
PUB DATE	2003-00-00
NOTE	393p.; For Volume 1, see UD 035 949.
AVAILABLE FROM	Information Age Publishing, 80 Mason Street, Greenwich, CT 06830. Web site: http://www.infoagepub.com.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Collected Works - General (020)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	Academically Gifted; Adolescents; Affirmative Action; Black Colleges; *Black Students; College Admission; Community Colleges; Culturally Relevant Education; Curriculum Development; Dropout Rate; Elementary Secondary Education; *Equal Education; Gender Issues; Higher Education; Low Income Groups; Minority Group Children; Preservice Teacher Education; Racial Discrimination; School Holding Power; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	Achievement Gap; Brown v Board of Education; California; Florida; Language Policy; No Child Left Behind Act 2001; Social Justice; Texas

ABSTRACT

This volume includes papers 16-32 in a 32-paper collection: (16) "Mining the Fields of Teacher Education: Preparing Teachers to Teach African American Children in Urban Schools" (Patricia A. Edwards, Gwendolyn T. McMillon, and Clifford T. Bennett); (17) "Mentoring Adolescents At Risk or At Promise" (Tammie M. Causey and Kassie Freeman); (18) "Why are There So Few African Americans in Gifted Education Programs?" (Frank C. Worrell); (19) "The Disproportionality of African Americans in Special Education: An Enduring Threat to Equality and Opportunity" (Audrey Davis McCray, Gwendolyn Webb-Johnson, and La Vonne I. Neal); (20) "The Dropout Rate among African American Males: A Policy Perspective" (Richard A. Verdugo and Ronald D. Henderson); (21) "School A or School B? The Nexus between Race and School Choice" (RoSusan D. Bartee, M. Christopher Brown II, and William T. Trent); (22) "A New Model for Governance in Big City School Districts" (Richard C. Hunter, Frank Brown, and Susan Donahoo); (23) "Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back: Campus Climate, Gender, and African American Representation in Higher Education" (Gniesha Y. Dinwiddie and Walter R. Allen); (24) "Affirmative Action Attitudes of African American Community College Students: The Impact of Educational Aspirations, Self-Interest, and Racial Affect" (Eboni M. Zamani); (25) "Challenging the Academic Divide: An Examination of Persistence Factors among Low-Income Students of Color" (Eugene L. Anderson, Carol Camp Yeakey, Harriet R. Morrison, and Beverly D. Epps); (26) "Misrepresented and Misunderstood: Contemporary Dilemmas Facing HBCUs" (Jeanita W. Richardson); (27) "Navigating the Shape of the River: Helping Black Students Succeed in Colleges and Universities" (Joy L. Gaston); (28) "A Different World: The Social and Educational Objectives of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Before and After the Brown Decision" (V.P. Franklin); (29) "When

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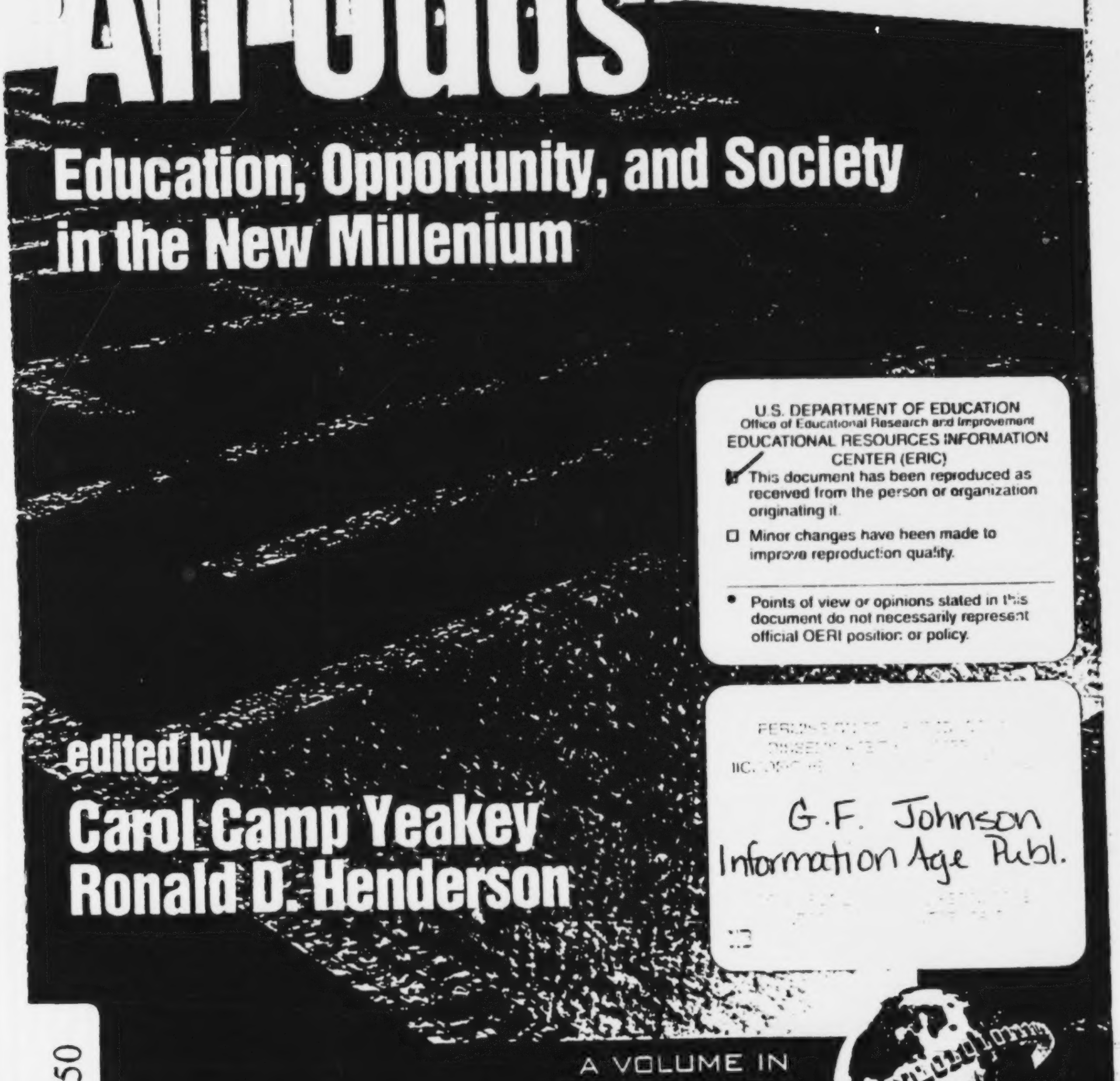
Surmounting All Odds

Education, Opportunity, and Society in the New Millenium



edited by

Carol Camp Yeakey
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A VOLUME IN
RESEARCH ON
AFRICAN AMERICAN EDUCATION

UD 035 950

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Surmounting All Odds

Education, Opportunity, and Society in the New Millennium

Volume 2

A volume in
Research on African American Education
Series Editors: Carol Camp Yeakey and Ronald D. Henderson

3

Surmounting All Odds

Education, Opportunity, and Society in the New Millennium

Volume 2

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IAP
INFORMATION AGE
PUBLISHING
80 Mason Street • Greenwich, Connecticut 06830 • www.infoagepub.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Surmounting all odds : education, opportunity, and society in the new
millennium / edited by Carol Camp Yeakey and Ronald D. Henderson.
p. cm. – (Research on African American education)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 1-931576-26-2 (pbk.) – ISBN 1-931576-27-0 (hardcover)
1. African Americans–Education. 2. Educational equalization–United
States. 3. Discrimination in education–United States. I. Yeakey,
Carol Camp. II. Henderson, Ronald D. III. Series.
LC2717.S87 2003
371.829'96073–dc21
2003011105

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Printed in the United States of America

To the late W.E.B. Du Bois
and the intellectual legacy he left for us all

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CHAPTER 16

MINING THE FIELDS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Preparing Teachers to Teach African American Children in Urban Schools

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For many years there has been a continuous battle against illiteracy being fought in the United States. Researchers and other educators have attempted to eradicate illiteracy, especially among school-age children. Despite their attempts, many African American children continue to struggle in their academic subjects in classrooms all across this country. Innovative programs providing early intervention, such as Head Start, have improved the educational experiences of some African American students, but others remain "at risk" in their poor, urban schools. Some of their teachers, who are usually White, middle-class females, develop creative

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Surmounting All Odds, pages 389–409
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methods to reach and teach their African American students; but many are unprepared to effectively negotiate the multiple tasks and roles of teachers who teach students culturally different from themselves. Oftentimes when seeking answers to educational problems, we look to examples of best practices to provide insight concerning tested and tried methods of approach. These examples are unique instances of victories, when everything seems to work for the best. In this chapter, the authors have chosen to take a more realistic approach by presenting an example of an urban school where the problems and complexities became overwhelming, and resulted in teacher frustration and resistance to the changes suggested by a research team that attempted to provide assistance.

Baker Elementary, the site of the case study, is a predominantly Black urban school in a midwestern city where things are not working, where programs are intractable and difficult to turn around—even "stuck." The first two authors worked for 3 years at Baker Elementary School, but despite the best of intentions of most of those in the school community, the research team could not get itself on a trajectory toward program improvement. The case described in this chapter provides many insights, illustrating some of the practices and dispositions to watch for as researchers negotiate relationships in schools. Most importantly, it illuminates some of the difficulties that teachers who teach in urban schools must face.

The implications in this study for teacher education programs are critical, thus Clifford T. Bennett, Professor and Chairman, Department of Teacher Education, College of Education, Cleveland State University, responds to this case study by sharing personal reflections and emphasizing the lessons that teacher educators can learn as we prepare mostly White teachers to work in urban settings. We know that more often than not, many of the children who live in urban settings are poor and African American. It is critical that teacher education programs prepare all of their students, including White, middle-class females, to successfully teach all children, including those in urban school settings.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BAKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY

> We all want our kids to succeed, but we don't know how to go about it in the right way. That's what's missing here. I mean, we have done some things, but not everyone does the same things in their classrooms...and then we have teachers who just won't change their ways, so what do we do with them? How do we get them to change? (Mrs. Thomas, a first-grade teacher at Baker School)

Mrs. Thomas's words embody the problems and the possibilities of the instructional change process—the complex questions, the intense emotions, and the potential conflicts that many urban American schools face as teachers and administrators strive to provide effective and equitable education for all children. Over a decade ago, Montero-Sieburth (1989) described urban schools as "battlegrounds of educational change" (p. 332), and the rising tide of new programs and policies designed to facilitate improvement has not yet subsided. However, these programs can yield outcomes that are superficial and short-lived if they do not involve teachers and administrators in the hard work of the instructional change process.

At the heart of the instructional change process is the *change agent.* Fullan (1993) characterizes change agents as individuals who have a personal vision and are capable of building this vision with colleagues, view problems as learning opportunities, and are committed to the moral purposes of productive educational change. A fundamental premise is that each and every educator must strive to be an effective change agent; teachers and principals must be willing to "roll up their sleeves" and participate in a process of change that can be difficult, complex, and uncharted. While urban school professionals are generally viewed as the primary change agents, educational researchers (e.g., university professors) have oftentimes served as consultants and as professional resources (Hall & Hord, 1987). In these capacities, researchers do not mandate change; rather, they become a part of the instructional "change team" and offer support to teachers and administrators by (1) working with them to develop innovations, (2) providing training and staff development, (3) coaching individuals, (4) helping to monitor and evaluate progress, and (5) organizing and participating in dissemination efforts (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1991; Roemer, 1991; Saxl, Miles, & Liebermann, 1989).

Increasingly, researchers have worked with urban school professionals in an effort to improve literacy instruction. Urban schools typically serve students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, are generally located in impoverished neighborhoods, and have few professional and instructional resources, all of which might potentially contribute to persistent reading difficulties (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Montero-Sieburth (1989) and McGill-Franzen and Allington (1991) assert that classroom reading instruction, particularly in terms of teachers' pedagogical knowledge and strategies for low-achieving or "at-risk" students, is significantly related to the organizational policies and structures of schools. Consequently, preventative literacy interventions have been centralized in the instructional change processes of many urban schools, and researchers have collaborated with school professionals in order to help them develop and implement empirically based innovations (see Snow et al., 1998, for descriptions of studies).

This case study shares the story of the instructional change process in one urban elementary school. We want to show the "real work" involved in an urban school change process, for, like Roemer (1991), we believe that change should not be described as neat and linear—its messiness, its challenges, and its complexity must be revealed if others are to learn from our experience. As we tell our story from the perspective of researchers on the instructional change team at Baker Elementary School, we share our experiences in responding to and working with school professionals who have asked for our help in improving literacy instruction, and present strategies for helping these professionals become change agents. Additionally, we highlight the implications of our case study for teacher education programs by discussing issues that must be addressed in order to successfully teach African American and other minority students in urban settings.

THE STUDY

Just as no man is an island, no teacher truly works alone. Schools can be seen as networks of individuals who work together to help children learn. These networks can include teacher teams, parent groups, and parents working with teachers who work either together or at cross-purposes. From our studies of schools who are effective in working with children of poverty (see Taylor, Pressley, & Pearson, 2000), we know that effective schools contain many such networks, but are especially effective in marshalling parents and teachers together around common goals. These networks are often difficult to form, especially when there is a disconnection between the school and the community.

This study of instructional networks was situated in a broader research agenda. The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) funded our study for a four-year period as an integral component of its home–school research focus. We conceptualized the project as an "intervention" that would ultimately change the nature of partnerships between teachers and parents in order to facilitate support for students' literacy achievement. We went into the work with high hopes and expectations about what we might accomplish if we could focus the collective efforts of teachers and parents on children's literacy development, and on building an instructional network that involved all of these players in facilitating communication and curricular articulation across roles and grade levels. This is the story of how and why we failed to meet those hopes and expectations. We tell it in the hope that others will learn from our experience and succeed where we have failed.

The project site was Baker School (a pseudonym), an urban, midwestern elementary school that serves approximately 300 students. Over half of

Baker's student population is African American and other minorities, and nearly 80% of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (Michigan School Report, 1999). Baker has extremely low scores on the statewide assessment, with nearly 60% of the students receiving "unsatisfactory" scores on the reading test (Michigan School Report, 1999), and there has been little evidence of upward movement over several years. The persistence of such low scores has led to supplementary funding, intended to reduce class size to less than 20 students per classroom and support the use of Reading Recovery to improve literacy instruction.

An important feature of Baker School was that it also housed in its basement ("downstairs," as the staff calls it) a federally funded Head Start Program. The fact that a Head Start facility was located in the building made Baker an even more attractive site for studying home–school connections; perhaps, we thought, we could help parents of preschoolers get a "head start" on thinking about their relationship to the elementary school upstairs.

Participants from Project Years 1997–2000

The university researchers on the project were Pat Edwards (principal investigator), Gwendolyn McMillon, Jennifer Turner, and Brigette Laier (graduate assistants). The Baker School administration and staff involved in the project included three lead teachers, one teaching assistant, and three administrators from the Head Start program. Included from the elementary school program were one administrator, two kindergarten teachers, three first-grade teachers, two second-grade teachers, two third-grade teachers, one Reading Recovery coordinator, and the HOSTS (Helping One Student to Succeed) tutoring program coordinator. Although not every participant was involved in the project for the entire three years, they represent the core of researchers and Baker School professionals who were invested in and committed to this study and to the instructional change process.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As the principal investigator, Pat envisioned the project to foster home–school connections around the school's literacy curriculum. Her overarching goal was to help teachers and parents "get on the same page" by organizing and coordinating Parent Informant Literacy Groups, which would make school-based literacy practices and skills more accessible to Baker Elementary's culturally diverse parents. In essence, the goal was to make the school's "culture of power" (Delpit, 1995) explicit to African American and Hispanic parents, because their inability to help their children succeed at the reading and writing activities of the school suggested that they might not be familiar with school-based literacy knowledge (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 1991).

Prior to forming these parent groups, we wanted to know specifically what kinds of pedagogical strategies the teachers used for early literacy instruction, how these strategies mapped on to the literacy curriculum, and how teachers conceptualized and organized their instructional activities. Over a two-year period, we (Pat and her research assistants) gathered these data by observing Head Start and lower elementary school classrooms on a weekly basis, talking informally with teachers during recess and lunchtime, and formally interviewing teachers, support staff (e.g., the Reading Recovery coordinator and the HOSTS tutoring program coordinator), and the principal.

We enacted our roles as "school ethnographers" (Obgu, 1981) by trying to discover the implicit rules and norms of the school culture via participation in classroom and school activities. We discovered early on that the school was "stuck" (Rosenholtz, 1989), particularly around issues of effective instruction for students labeled "at risk"—the population Baker primarily serves. It seemed to us that teachers and administrators had no clear plan or set of goals. They did not seem to connect with students in ways that would help them learn. Our perceptions were based upon three significant points at which we thought the school's culture was fundamentally "stuck":

1. *Folk theories about at-risk students and their families.* Taking a page from Bruner (1996), we undertook our study with the assumption that teachers and administrators would have "folk theories" about students and their families, and that these folk theories would influence the teaching and learning process. Folk theories are expectations, beliefs, and assumptions formed over time through personal and professional school experience; their gradual formation gives them a durable quality. At Baker, we discovered that elementary school teachers' and administrators' folk theories tended to place responsibility for the students' "at-risk" status on the students and their families (Edwards, Danridge, & Pleasants, 1999). Teacher interviews revealed the consistent belief that students were disadvantaged because they came from violent neighborhoods and "unstable" homes, and arrived at school lacking basic literacy skills. What was most interesting about this folk theory was the way in which it contrasted with what was happening "downstairs" in the building. In the basement, Head Start teachers and administrators were working with the same group of "at-risk" children, and had made significant

progress in connecting with families and the community *and* in advancing their students' literacy development; however, the "upstairs" elementary teachers and administrators never went down to see what the Head Start program was doing, nor did they try to adopt any of the classroom pedagogies or practices that had proved so effective with this younger cohort from the same population. We speculated that because Baker teachers had neither an incentive nor an opportunity to witness alternative practices, such as might have been afforded by a collaboration with the Head Start professionals, folk theories about at-riskness might have become "stuck" on a single note—"It's what the kids bring to school that lets them down."

2. *Disconnection in the instructional network.* We spent a substantial amount of time in classrooms trying to document pedagogical practices. As we (the research team) talked about our impressions of the teaching at Baker, we noticed that none of us knew exactly what teachers were doing or how their actions fit into the school's curricular and instructional program. We conducted formal and informal interviews with teachers, and concluded that the school's instructional network was disconnected, meaning that there was no coordination within and between grade levels. For example, one first-grade teacher told us that she used "Freddy words" for sight vocabulary, but could articulate neither where these words came from (e.g., the school's improvement plan, the curriculum, the district), nor how they fit into the school's learning objectives for first grade. Since no other first-grade teacher used these special words, it was difficult to understand how this teacher's strategy connected with those of the other first-grade teachers, or of the kindergarten and second-grade teachers. This lack of instructional coordination characterized the second- and third-grade classrooms as well. One second-grade teacher's comments expressed teachers' general feelings of instructional disconnection:

> I think it would be good for our teachers, curriculum-wise, to know where we are headed and how we need to get there. I think some teachers really don't know. They just say, "We're doing this and this." But they don't think enough ahead...they don't say, "This time of year we're going to be doing this...," but they don't do that, so everything they teach is disjointed. In terms of instruction, we are all over the place.

McGill-Franzen and Allington (1991) found that when children with reading difficulties receive a compartmentalized array of discrete literacy tasks that are unrelated (either across levels or between classroom and "specialist instructional" contexts), students make little progress in achievement. Such a disconnection between classroom instruction and special programs (Reading Recovery and HOSTS) was evident at Baker.

3. *Lack of shared vision.* The research on program articulation is inconsistent. Studies of staff development tell us that teachers need to make curriculum and teaching strategies "their own" (Richardson & Placier, in press). Studies of effective high-poverty schools and teachers (see Taylor, Pressley, and Pearson, 2000) suggest that coordinated service delivery and articulated approaches to curriculum and instruction are important. This tension in the research suggests that while teachers should not be required to teach literacy from a "cookie-cutter mold," neither should curriculum and pedagogy be a matter of "anything goes" as long as a particular teacher is convinced it will work. We found lack of instructional coordination in Baker that was symptomatic of a much deeper problem: there was no sense of shared vision to guide instruction. As the words of one first-grade teacher reveal, teachers do not seem to know about the school's main goals and objectives:

   > I don't think there is a real school mission here, or at least I am not really aware of one.... Perhaps there is a mission, but I don't think it's clearly defined and understood by all staff members. I mean, we know we're here to teach, but I don't recall any conversations about any deeper purposes or meaning in our work.

   As a "restructured" school, Baker was required to develop a school improvement plan, but most of the teachers did not perceive this document to be integral to their instructional practice. Moreover, the demands of urban principalship made it extremely difficult for the principal at Baker to expend the time, energy, and resources necessary for effective instructional leadership (Danridge, Edwards, & Pleasants, 2000). It came as no surprise that Baker School lacked a strong, clear vision for the future of the school and its students.

FIRST ATTEMPTS AT INTERVENTION

In light of our growing realization that Baker School was indeed "stuck," with the agreement of the staff, we began to shift the focus of the project away from fostering home–school connections, and toward examining and improving classroom instruction. During the 1999–2000 academic year, we worked intensively with the first-, second-, and third-grade teachers. Our central goal was to help these teachers reflect upon their instructional strengths and needs, and to provide them with multiple opportunities to work together to generate new goals and new strategies for achieving them.

In the beginning of the year the teachers expressed an interest in talking about their colleagues' day-to-day issues and struggles and the ways in which these problems affected their literacy instruction. Thus, we thought that having teachers talk about "real" students and parents from their classrooms would help them to generate innovative pedagogical practices. In an effort to support this burgeoning interest, we asked teachers for four names of students and/or parents about whom they were "concerned"; then we (the research team) collected "parent stories" from this focal group. Parent stories are personal narratives gained from open-ended conversations and/or interviews about traditional and nontraditional early literacy activities and experiences in the home (Edwards, Pleasants, & Franklin, 1999). We met individually with parents for approximately 30 minutes, and talked with them about (1) their home literacy activities, (2) their perceptions of their children's academic and social strengths, and (3) their perceptions of and attitudes about their relationship with their child's teacher.

After the parent stories were collected, we convened another meeting for first-, second-, and third-grade teachers to view the videotaped stories in small, grade-level groups. Each grade level was shown three 30-minute videotaped parent stories. Following each of the videotapes, teachers were invited to discuss the implications for classroom practice. Specifically, teachers were asked to respond to the following questions: How could you use the information gained from this parent interview to inform your classroom instruction? How does this information help you as a teacher? What new insights did you gain about this child?

After the discussion, teachers completed a reflection form as a way to evaluate their learning from this experience. We asked two questions: What new insights did you gain about this child? How might you use the information to enhance instruction for this child?

We then convened a final meeting in May for first-, second-, and third-grade teachers to talk about their literacy instructional practices; these conversations were informed by instructional log data that we had compiled in February and March. On these instructional logs, teachers recorded the amount of time that students of different achievement levels spent in various literacy-instructional activities (e.g., phonics, word recognition strategies, comprehension, writing, spelling and mechanics, and reading). Small grade-level groups reflected on the data we had compiled across teachers and grade levels, and then created an "ideal" distribution for their lowest achievers: How should these students spend the 150 minutes of language arts time that was available to them each day? We hoped this would encourage the grade-level teachers to discuss their instructional priorities. If that worked, we thought, then we could tackle articulation across grade levels.

RESISTANCE

The third year of the project, 1999–2000, when we implemented the two interventions (parent stories and instructional logs), proved to be a turning point for the project. The tensions and conflicts that erupted ultimately dismantled the intervention.

The "parent story" meetings for the first-, second-, and third-grade teachers were disappointing to those of us who served as facilitators for the grade-level groups. Generally, the teachers did not use the information from the parent stories to generate new literacy-instructional strategies, nor did they use the stories as an occasion to question their views of the source of students' at-risk status. Rather, the activity had just the opposite effect: much of the talk showed the same focus on counterproductive student and family behaviors that had emerged from the first-year interviews. A modal comment was that teachers "did everything possible and nothing works with these kids" or that they had "already discussed this with the parents and nothing happened." We left with the impression that most teachers felt their instruction did not need to change, but that students and parents disagreed.

We felt paralyzed. What we thought were our best attempts to encourage teachers to consider other etiologies for students' lack of success had backfired on us. We wanted the teachers to appreciate and build upon the resources brought to the school by children and their families; we wanted teachers to assume that, regardless of the cause of students' current achievement, ambitious pedagogy and boundless opportunity to engage in literacy activities would improve achievement and, more importantly, the literacy practices behind it. However, teachers seemed to be more comfortable sharing "war stories" about their classroom experiences than brainstorming new strategies and ideas that could possibly transform their situations.

The resistance was full-blown by the beginning of Project Year 4. At an informational meeting in October 2000, Dr. P. David Pearson, Director of CIERA, encouraged Baker School to join a nationwide "School Change" study. Built around a framework that combined the best knowledge about classroom reading pedagogy and school reform, this model emphasized instructional change via systematic study of classroom reading instruction, building a strong leadership team, and cross-grade collaboration. Teachers from kindergarten to fifth grade would participate in a systematic study of their reading instruction using data collected from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and instructional logs. To foster instructional change, teachers would participate in 1–2 large group meetings each month, as well as weekly small grade-level group activities. The study provided an external facilitator to coordinate these activities, as well as additional resources (e.g., funding, professional support, diagnostic information) for teachers to actively engage in the school change process. In order to join the study, 75% of Baker School staff had to "buy into" the program for two years.

This meeting had interesting and complex dynamics. Initially, the teachers asked many questions about the project and David responded to them. As these brief exchanges took place, several teachers who seemed interested in the School Change Project urged their colleagues to participate. In fact, one teacher, who was also the union representative at Baker, commented that the CIERA project was "perfect" for them, and that he would help any teacher who wanted to change schools rather than participate in the project find a position at another school. While some teachers agreed with the union representative, others seemed to interpret his words as a veiled threat, and the tension began to mount. Many teachers complained that they didn't have time to spend on the project. For example, one kindergarten teacher commented, "I don't have time to spend a lot of time after school, I'm in a masters program." Other teachers expressed doubts that this program would help them to improve their literacy instruction and test scores. By this time, the Baker teachers and the researchers felt frustrated, upset, and insulted. Despite the meeting's uncomfortable ending, David and Pat were hopeful that the teachers would participate. At a faculty meeting two days later, however, the majority of teachers voted not to participate in the CIERA nationwide "School Change" Project.

VOICES OF THE SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS

As researchers, we were concerned about *how* the instructional change process should occur, but the voices of the staff at Baker Elementary School revealed that they were more concerned about *what* should change. We noticed that school professionals talked about instructional change using "public voices" and "private voices." Publicly, the Baker staff seemed to have a "voice" of consensus, and they openly admitted that the school had serious problems and changes needed to be made.

But privately, the teachers expressed a wide range of ideas about *what* really needed to change. Some teachers felt that individual teachers needed to change their instructional approaches, and by doing so, many students' test scores and literacy achievement would improve. For example, Ms. Stahl, a first-grade teacher, commented:

> Well, you know, some of our teachers haven't changed the way they teach, and it's almost like they are using the philosophy from teachers who taught them in school. The times have changed, but they haven't, and it's really hard to get them to see that they need to do things differently. They get offended, but they are part of the reason why our students are failing.

Ms. Rutherford, a second-grade teacher, echoed this sentiment:

> I think the problem is that we have some teachers who just keep doing the same thing over and over because it's easy...they're not willing to go out and find a different way to be effective...even after being taught new ways of teaching reading, for example, many teachers here just say, 'That's great, that's fine, but I'm still doing it my own way.' And that's why we have so many kids here who struggling with reading.

These two comments suggest that some teachers believed that their colleagues were the ones who needed to change. Yet these voices were "private" because teachers felt uncomfortable discussing these important issues publicly for fear of being confrontational, which Ms. Miller, a third-grade teacher, affirmed:

> The bad teachers run a bunch of dittos and sit at their desks. These teachers know their teaching is not effective for these types of children, but they are not willing to change at all...and that's a real problem. I'm really afraid to step on their toes, and no one else says anything about it...but how do we get them to change?

While some teachers believed that only a few teachers were ineffective and needed to change, several other staff members, particularly the Reading Recovery coordinator and the HOSTS Tutoring Program coordinator, believed that instructional change needed to be a school-wide effort. Mrs. Smith, the HOSTS coordinator, wrote the district-mandated School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the teachers and support staff at Baker Elementary School. Publicly, the teachers appeared to be in agreement with the SIP, but privately teachers admitted that in the past they had completely ignored it. Mrs. Smith spoke openly about her frustrations with this situation:

> The SIP is supposed to help us restructure the way we do things, but I think the staff doesn't want to follow the plan because it means they won't be able to take the easy way out anymore. Our problem is that the kids are "way down here," but the teachers are teaching "way up there." And I've said this in front of them, so that hopefully they are starting to think about how they can change their teaching style...but honestly, very few actually do. They won't even do what's in our SIP, so why would they listen to me?

In sum, the Baker staff used contrasting "public" and "private" voices to talk about instructional change and the ways they wanted to enact it in their school. Publicly, the teachers appeared to have reached consensus about changing their instruction, but privately, they expressed concerns, fears, and uncertainty about what the changes specifically were and who should make them.

VOICES OF THE RESEARCHERS

As researchers participating in the instructional "change team," we had our own perceptions and ideas about the complexities and the challenges inherent in the instructional change process. During our research meetings, we had opportunities to speak candidly about our experiences, and we share some of these thoughts in this section.

Pat

Throughout this entire process, I have had the feeling that Baker teachers did not think that they were the problem; they tended to blame the high rates of failure and low test scores on the students and their families. I understand that this population of students can be difficult to work with because they are facing some real issues: poverty, violence, crime, high transient rates, and difficult family situations. Yet the teachers seemed to be content doing what "looks like school, feels like school, and seems like school" in their classrooms, and blaming the students for the failure. I provided opportunities for the teachers to examine their attitudes, and the strengths and weaknesses of their literacy instruction, to help them accept some responsibility for their school's dire circumstances. At the instructional log meeting, I had hoped that teachers would discuss some of these issues, but I was disappointed when they admitted that they did not spend a lot of quality time seriously recording an accurate description of their instructional activities during the data collection period. I was shocked by the indifferent attitude they took toward this important opportunity to describe their own teaching, and to me, their unwillingness to closely examine their instructional practices conveyed that they didn't want to accept any responsibility for the serious problems at Baker Elementary School.

Toward the end of the instructional logs meeting, I shared information with them about the CIERA School Change Project because I wanted to see them succeed. I felt that this project would greatly benefit this school because it offered the opportunity to network with schools that were high poverty schools and faced similar challenges, and provided the resources and support needed for effective instructional improvement. At that time, most of the teachers seemed interested in the School Change Project, so I was very frustrated and disappointed when the teachers voted not to participate in October. I couldn't understand why the teachers did not want to take advantage of the generous resources and support that this national project afforded. In my opinion, Baker teachers did not really want to do the hard work it took to change; they didn't want to be accountable for the failures of the students, so they decided not to participate in the project. My intuition was confirmed when I spoke to one of my colleagues, and she shared with me that Baker teachers loved her project as long as she focused on the students' issues and problems. However, as soon as she wanted to focus intensively on teachers and their instruction, the Baker teachers decided not to participate in her project. So it seemed to me that there was a cycle: Baker teachers had participated in several projects, but always "stopped short" of actually implementing any real instructional changes. Since the project completely derailed, I wonder how these teachers are going to change, and if they ever really wanted to at all.

Gwen

Initially, I believed that Baker teachers were excited about participating in our project and welcomed the opportunity to share their realistic opinions about the failures and successes of their school. However, after the project focus shifted to instructional coordination, teachers became somewhat defensive and uncooperative. I understand that it is difficult to give and accept criticism, but how can literacy instruction improve if teachers are unwilling to admit their own shortcomings? I think that teachers have to allow themselves to be evaluated, and have to be willing to critically evaluate their colleagues. These evaluations should not only focus on weaknesses, but strengths that teachers can share as "models" for their colleagues to use for instructional improvement.

I was very disappointed to learn that some Baker teachers were not committed to helping their students. Throughout the study, several teachers commented that they would not have any problems if they were teaching in suburban schools. One teacher told me that she did not even want to be at Baker School and as soon as she found something else, she would be leaving. Based upon these teachers' comments, it seemed to me that some teachers did not believe that they could help many of the students at Baker because they were too "at risk" and that the odds of success were overwhelmingly against them. I believe that it takes a special type of teacher to successfully teach in an urban setting—one who is willing to do whatever it takes to help their students. Interestingly, I met several teachers at Baker who attempted to implement positive changes, but colleagues who did not want to put forth any extra effort ostracized them.

In my opinion, the frustration and hopelessness displayed by Baker teachers was a type of oppression, and essentially, they had allowed themselves to believe that their circumstances could not improve. The Baker teachers' oppressive state reminds me of Paulo Freire's (1993) work, in which he theorizes that "oppressed" people must participate in their own "process of liberation" in order to become free. "Outsiders" are unable to liberate the oppressed, but can assist in supportive ways. Baker teachers did not understand that their process of liberation required them to take responsibility for the successes and failures of the school. They needed to believe that they *could* and *would* make a difference in their students' literacy achievement, thereby increasing test scores. As researchers, we are outsiders who can offer assistance and support, but the teachers must be willing to "free themselves." This raises a critical question: Who's really at risk, the students or the teachers? The teachers have a choice, but unfortunately, the students do not.

DR. BENNETT'S NARRATIVE RESPONSE TO THE CASE STUDY

As an African American man with two sons and one daughter, I have a special concern for African American students in the United States' educational system. In order to become a successful educator, I have had to endure many hardships and trials, which influence my perspective of schools like Baker Elementary. Although as a child I was provided with nurturing, guidance, and academic support from my mother, who was an elementary school teacher, I realize that many students are not as fortunate as my siblings and I. They come to school with many problems on their minds; some are contending with limited resources, negative opinions of schools and schoolteachers, and other issues that are related to poverty. Because their parents are unable to provide the cultural capital needed to prepare them to negotiate their educational experiences, they may be at risk of receiving an inadequate education. My parents would not allow teachers to become lackadaisical concerning their responsibility to challenge me. Similarly, I expect my sons' teachers to push them to reach their fullest potential in the classroom. But what happens to the students, like many of those at Baker, who do not have advocates visiting their schools and holding teachers accountable? The Baker case study reaffirms the fact that teachers must hold themselves accountable and responsible. Teachers, especially those teaching in urban schools, must be willing to roll up their sleeves and make a commitment to developing ways to reach and teach their students.

When I was in school, two parent homes was the common family structure and desegregation had not totally affected the demographics of the school population. I was privileged to have many Black teachers who understood Black culture and shared values and beliefs with their students and parents. The African American community had high expectations for their youth during this time, and provided the encouragement and opportunities for the academic and social development of Black youth. We were taught to be leaders, to do our best at all times, to strive for excellence and accept nothing less. Teachers considered teaching to be a political activity, and they utilized every opportunity to inform their students of their civic duties and responsibilities. Unfortunately, many African American students do not have these types of experiences now. Instead they are faced with cultural obstacles to educational success, often resulting from the goodwill of a well-intentioned teacher who simply does not understand how to reach and teach them.

With the teacher population being 90% White, middle-class females, and the student population changing to over 50% African American and other minorities, I am extremely concerned about preparing students in my teacher education department for the issues that they will need to address when teaching students who are culturally different from themselves. The teachers at Baker Elementary were unwilling to examine their folk theories about their students, develop a connected instructional network, and share a common vision. It was much easier to keep on "playing school," in the words of the researchers. Similarly, it is much easier for teacher education programs to stick to the status quo—teaching methods and contents courses with maybe one course in multicultural education, and sending students out to "real" schools unprepared. Let's face it, our teacher education programs prepare students to teach a homogenous group of students in suburban schools. Most of them do not want to teach in urban settings because they are afraid that they may become "at risk" themselves. Realistically, very few of them will get jobs teaching in all-White suburban schools. Based on changing demographics, most of them will be teaching in schools where over 50% of the student population are African Americans or other minorities. Because the student population is changing, the common family structure is changing, and issues related to education are changing, it is logical that teacher education programs must also change. We must change with the times.

Unfortunately, I was not surprised at the end result of the Baker Elementary case study. Despite 30 years of multicultural education, many teacher education programs only give "lip service" and are not on the same page in terms of what multicultural education really means. As I forestated, usually only one course in multicultural education is provided for pre-service teachers. During that time, professors are supposed to prepare their students to teach students from all cultures. Multicultural education is a term that is on paper for teacher education programs but there are not dialogues occurring that would actually challenge students to get out of their comfort zones and really address difficult-to-discuss issues such as race, culture, class, and poverty as they relate to teaching and learning in classrooms.

Perhaps one reason why Baker Elementary teachers were unable and unwilling to discuss issues in their group sessions with the researchers was because they felt uncomfortable expressing their true feelings about their situation. If they had never been given an opportunity to talk about their own biases and personal ideas about someone different from themselves, they may have been totally uncomfortable with the whole idea of "talking" about various issues. Not only were they uncomfortable talking about race, culture, and their prejudices, but they were also unwilling to discuss their role in the failure of the school. Some teachers become quite defensive when they are evaluated. They may feel that they are asking for trouble if they admit that they do not know how to teach their students. Instead they continue "playing school" while their students are passed on from one grade to the next, developing additional "at-risk" characteristics. Teacher education programs need to provide many opportunities for students to be evaluated, and learn how to evaluate. They need to become accustomed to accepting feedback from "critical friends."

In addition to providing opportunities to discuss critical issues and become comfortable with the process of evaluation, teacher educators must require students to think deeply about what it means to teach minorities from nondominant cultures, many with opposing frames of reference that may clash with their own. Student teachers must think deeply about the implications of teaching as a political activity. What is their responsibility to students whose parents look at education as a means to social mobility? Multicultural education should not just be a passing thought, but an ideology that permeates everything that we do in teacher education.

Looking at the Baker Elementary case study forces me to consider ways to improve our teacher education program so that the students that graduate from our program have examined their folk theories, learned how to develop effective instructional networks, understand how to develop a school mission, and become a leader committed to advocate for students from all races, cultures, and ethnicities. In other words, we need to teach our student teachers to become "change agents," as described by Fullan (1993) and discussed in the introduction of this chapter.

Students should be required to examine their folk theories about cultures and races different from their own. Professors must bring these issues to the forefront of all courses. How one perceives oneself and others influence the methods they choose to utilize and the content they choose to teach. Therefore, whether the course is focusing on methods or content related to reading, math, science, or social studies, issues related to their folk theories are important and should be emphasized.

The Baker study also highlights the fact that cooperative learning should be an integral part of any teacher preparation program. Most professors and student teachers understand the value of cooperative learning and this approach is often utilized in elementary and secondary classrooms. If cooperative learning is effective inside the classroom, teachers need to be made aware that it can also be effective outside of the classroom. Developing instructional networks is simply implementing cooperative learning. Instructional networks require someone to take the lead and encourage others to work together toward a common goal. In cooperative groups, there often arises a negative voice that pessimistically challenges ideas; they look for weaknesses instead of strengths, and expect the worst instead of the best. We must help our teachers understand the importance of remaining committed in spite of negative influences that they might encounter in the schools where they teach. At Baker, several teachers seemed to be genuinely interested in helping their students, and willing to do whatever it took to accomplish the goals, however, the "negative voice" must have prevailed based on their final decision not to participate in the School Change Project. Our students must be prepared to stand firm in the face of opposition, never succumbing to negative influences.

Finally, we must teach student teachers the importance of developing a school mission and sharing a vision. They need to learn the role and functions of school improvement teams, and how to develop and market school missions. As teacher educators, we must teach by example. Many teacher education programs lack a shared vision. We need to come together to discuss the "real" needs of our student teachers and the students whom they will be teaching. These needs must be seriously addressed and an overarching theme that is prevalent may become the vision for the group. The shared vision should be broad enough to encompass multiple issues, and specific enough to address the most important issues. It should include an idea and common goals that everyone can work toward.

It is my hope that teacher educators will join me in my quest to more effectively prepare teacher education students for the 21st century. In the words of my coauthor, Pat Edwards, "teacher education programs must comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable."

CONCLUSION

Current perspectives on literacy development and achievement for students labeled "at risk" have advocated the coordination of instructional programs within schools (see Leu & Kinzer, 1987; Slavin, Karweit, Wasik, Madden, & Dolan, 1994; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). In *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (1998), Snow and her colleagues assert that schools with large numbers of children at risk for reading difficulties need "rich resources" (p. 11) such as small class sizes, good school libraries, supportive instructional programs, high-quality instructional materials, and a warm and supportive learning environment. They advise that the additional support and services that these "rich resources" can provide to at-risk students must be coordinated with the teachers' instructional programs to maximize effectiveness. Furthermore, they contend that in cases of schoolwide poor reading performance, improvements should be made at the district and/or school level rather than on a classroom-by-classroom basis.

Baker did have "rich resources" to support their students, but it was not clear that teachers expected the resources to help. They apparently believed that these "rich resources" would either automatically improve literacy learning for "at-risk" students, or would never take hold until the students and their families changed. The irony is that these teachers were professionals who really wanted their students to improve. Administrators, teachers, and supporting staff members questioned why many of the students remained "at risk," but their search focused on answers unrelated to instruction or curriculum. We left with the strong impression that at least one of the reasons students at Baker remain "at risk" is the insurmountable difficulty the professional staff faced in trying to build, support, and coordinate their instructional networks around the specific families and children they serve. "Stuck" schools like Baker Elementary face a difficult task. Not only must they embrace reform, but also they must discard a powerful folk theory in favor of another—that parents of children of poverty do want their children to achieve and that teachers can work with parents to help children achieve. Only then will reform make sense; only then will it stand a chance of taking hold.

As Dr. Bennett emphasized, teacher education programs must rethink their mission and goals and realign them to prepare student teachers to meet the needs of the changing student population in the United States. Student teachers' folk theories about other cultures, about home–school connections, and about teacher accountability and responsibilities must be examined and continuously challenged. They must learn how to evaluate themselves and become comfortable with the idea of being evaluated for the purpose of instructional improvements with the goal of developing models of best practices to assist other teachers. Additionally, we must teach student teachers to become leaders—leaders in their classrooms, leaders in their schools, and leaders in the communities where they teach—implementing changes that improve the chances of all students, including African Americans and other minorities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was conducted as part of CIERA and under the Education Research and Development Centers Program (PR/Award No. R304R70004), as administrated by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education. The contents of the study described here do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the National Institute on Student Achievement, the National Institute on Early Childhood Development, or the U. S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government of the United States.

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CHAPTER 17

MENTORING ADOLESCENTS AT RISK OR AT PROMISE

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Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities toward himself and toward other people.... The individual can only say: "I am because we are; and since we are, therefore, I am."

—J. S. Mbiti (1970, p. 141)

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW: ADOLESCENTS AT RISK

The school performance and social behaviors of American youth persist as pressing issues in education. Despite expansive research in the area of education, vast experiential knowledge on the subject, and years of educational reform, the nation's schools are still failing to adequately meet the needs of large numbers of students, particularly African American students. Evidence of this exists in the job market, as well as in the disparate rates of academic failure, dropout, suspension, and expulsion in the country's public school systems. Some 1 million students drop out of school annually (National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys, 1996).

Surmounting All Odds, pages 411–421
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Every 10 seconds of the school day, a youngster drops out of public school; every 2 seconds of the school day, a public school student is suspended (Children's Defense Fund, 1992). Research verifies that African American adolescents are overrepresented in statistics on school dropout and discipline (National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys, 1996).

There is also evidence that youngsters who drop out, stop out, or are pushed out of school remain largely unsupervised during their separation from formalized academic programs (Reglin, 1998). The high incidence of unsupervised youth, not surprisingly, results in increased experimentation with tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs, and sex prior to their graduating from high school (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989). As such, high incidences of teen pregnancies, the birth of low-weight babies, infection with sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS), motor vehicle accidents, and the consequences of other risk-taking behaviors are increasingly associated with adolescents. It is no secret that African American adolescents are among those at highest risk for succumbing to the volatile circumstances that plague their communities and their age-mates. Almost 1 of every 6 Black male students age 14 to 19, for example, is at least two grade levels behind (National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys, 1996). Moreover, 1 of every 34 Black males is placed in a special education program for mental retardation (National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys).

Forebodings of these disturbing realities surfaced nearly 20 years ago when unfavorable educational outcomes for youngsters all across the United States gave rise to a report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), which labeled us a "nation at risk. " In their report, the Commission stated that

> [p]art of what is at risk is the promise first made on this continent: All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (p.115)

Nearly two decades since the National Commission on Excellence in Education articulated the nation's risk status, inadequate educational offerings and pervasive social ills continue to render a staggering number of our nation's youth at risk. African-American youth are disproportionately represented in that number. According to the U.S. Department of Education (1996b), nearly 4 million children fit the risk definition. In the 1989 Turning Points publication, the Carnegie Council reported that of the nation's 28 million children age 10 to 17, 14 million are either highly or moderately at risk. According to a report released by the Building Blocks for Youth Initiative, although African American youth between the ages of 10 and 17 constitute 15% of their age group in the country's population, they account for almost 26% of juvenile arrests, 32% of delinquency referrals to juvenile court, 41% of youth detained in delinquency cases, 46% of juveniles committed to corrections facilities, and 52% of juveniles transferred after judicial hearings to adult criminal court.

Furthermore, many of these youngsters who are among the millions of those defined as "at risk" belong to single-parent, female-headed, poor households, which can provide them with neither the psychosocial skills needed to succeed in society's mainstream nor the necessary educational skills (Holland, 1996). As a matter of record, 42% of the nation's Black children and 11% of its White children live in poverty (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1998). While 1 of every 63 White children lives in a "severely distressed" neighborhood, this is true for 1 of every 4 Black children (National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys, 1996). It is a documented fact that poverty is closely linked to a number of outcomes including education, delinquency, physical health, and emotional welfare (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2001). Not surprisingly, disadvantaged youth are likely to have difficulty attending, performing well in, or completing school. These youngsters are locked into a legacy of risk by the same society that maintains a status quo unconcerned with their disadvantaged parents.

What is it that deems our nation's educational systems incapable of meeting the needs of school students? Perhaps it is America's dysconsciousness regarding issues of social injustice and educational inequity. Dysconsciousness, "...an uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given" (King, 1991, p. 135), makes possible the fruitless inspection, dissection, and analysis of pervasive educational and societal issues and ills by educational, political, and economic experts. It allows the invisibility of that which is clearly visible.

Dysconsciousness, on the part of those capable of inciting large-scale social and educational transformation, ensures the maintenance of the status quo through the uncritical resistance of knowledge about existing social injustice and/or educational inequity. As such, the current and future well-being of too many youngsters is threatened. It is widely known and accepted that conditions related to poverty, minority status, and residency in urban areas increase young people's predisposition to school dropout and failure (Ascher, 1988; Tucker, 1999; Winfield, 1991). According to the *2001 Kids Count Data Book* (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2001), in 1999 one-fifth of youngsters age 16 to 19 residing in high-poverty, urban neighborhoods were high school dropouts. The environments that such disadvantaged youngsters are likely to populate tend to be plagued with high rates of crime, racism, and violence (Tucker, 1999). Not surprisingly, the schools in these areas usually lack the resources necessary for combating such problems and their adverse impact on student scholastic performance.

ADOLESCENTS AT PROMISE

Despite these bleak realities, African Americans—adults and children—continue to make great strides in terms of scholastic progress. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (1997), educational attainment levels of the parents of African American youngsters have increased markedly over the last few years. In 1972, 36% of Black mothers and 26% of Black fathers of young people age 15 to 18 had attained at least a high school diploma. By 1997, however 78% of Black mothers and 79% of Black fathers had done so. The percentage of Black high school completers who enrolled in college directly after high school graduation increased substantially between 1971 and 1997 (i.e., from 59% in 1971 to 87% in 1997) (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1998). In 1997 some 31% of Black adults age 25 to 29 who had enrolled in college after high school had completed one or more years; 16% had completed four or more years of college (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1998). Finally, a 1997 U.S. Department of Education Digest of Education Statistics documented that within the last 10 years, the proportion of bachelor's degree recipients who earned degrees in computer and information sciences was higher for African Americans than for European Americans. These findings are quite significant, considering that a 1996 report by the U.S. Department of Education found that high school students whose parents did not complete high school were more than twice as likely to drop out of school as students whose parents who had at least some college education.

Even within the context of great disparity, overwhelming need, and high risk, African American youth continue to demonstrate resilience and promise in terms of their academic progress. For instance, the literature shows that the dropout rate for African American school students in the United States has actually decreased over the last few years (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1996a). Also, the gap between Black and White students' scholastic performance in mathematics, reading, and science has narrowed noticeably (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). Furthermore, according to a 1996 National Summary Report by the College Board, more Black students are taking Advanced Placement exams and often following a more rigorous academic curriculum as a result of their scores. As well, research shows that Black students are devoting more of their free time than their White counterparts to learning activities such as attending summer school to retake subjects failed during the school year, to enhance basic skills, or to enroll in college courses for credit (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1996).

How would African American youngsters fair if educational offerings actually reflected the nation's espoused ethic of equality and educators exercised critical consciousness with regard to the cognitive and moral growth opportunities provided students? It is reasonable to assume that liberatory, praxis-oriented, cognitive and moral growth opportunities for all learners would result in greater humanity, equity, and productivity. Where might this process begin?

Schools are the most appropriate place to begin; after all, they are perhaps the largest socializing institutions in existence.

> If school, besides being an institution providing knowledge and intellectual training, also becomes a social platform, an encouraging part of the adolescents' everyday life, then it is open for important experiences leading to personal development in many dimensions. A "good school" in this sense is a society's unsurpassable contribution to youth politics. The school has to offer working and training opportunities with different learning situations that are meaningful and important for [youngsters]. (Hurrelmann, 1991, p. 42)

The educational offerings in such schools must forge beyond traditional structural and cultural borders and create inroads in curriculum and instruction that achieve the comprehension of diversity (Mahiri, 1998). Schools must allow for the creation of "new avenues of teaching and learning that are broad enough for the cultural traffic between the school and the communities it serves to travel in both directions" (Mahiri, 1998, p. 117). Toward this end, mentoring is proposed as a means of enhancing the quality of educational offerings by expanding the context of school and schooling to invite those traditionally considered outsiders to participate with students in meaningful, relevant teaching and learning processes.

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE RELATED TO MENTORING

Although the empirical research base regarding youth relationships with unrelated adults is quite limited, mentoring is presently thought of as primary to validating, educating, and promoting the healthy development of young people for an outcome of current and future success. For middle and high school-age youngsters, mentoring is gaining substantial popularity (Hamilton, 1991). Since adolescence is a time during which young people typically become emotionally, socially, and economically detached from their families and because the family is less likely to be regarded as an educational authority by the adolescent (Hurrelmann, 1981), researchers and practitioners are encouraging the establishment of mentoring programs, particularly for underrepresented youth. More specifically, the literature suggests that mentoring represents a potential intervention for many students' school-related challenges such as self-esteem, motivation, attendance, and academic achievement (Boyd et al., 1990; McPartland & Nettles, 1991; Spencer, 1991; Taylor, 1993; Wierner & Mincy, 1993). Moreover, an accumulation of longitudinal research indicates that a relationship with an interested adult was the one common factor among youngsters able to succeed despite challenging and oppressive school and life circumstances (Freedman, 1988). Accordingly, mentoring is currently thought of as a means to an end of providing all youngsters "...regardless of race or class or economic status...a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 115).

According to Welch (1997), for a mentoring program to be effective for underrepresented groups, it "...must foster the kind of equity (validation of both the mentors' and the proteges' experiences, histories, backgrounds, and critical perspectives) that encourages discourse, critical dialogue, and understanding of the role of power (within the relationship(s) and the institution)" (p. 57). In an attempt to adhere to Welch's criteria for effective mentoring, Causey (2000), in her dissertation study, adapted the Networking Mentoring Model conceived by Schockett, Yosimura, Beyard-Tyler, and Haring (1983) for use with middle school-age students at promise who were existing in a political, social, and educational climate that placed them at risk. The resulting model, the Transformational Mentoring Model, combined the notion of mentoring as a one-to-one process with the idea that culturally responsive group mentoring is needed to acknowledge and address the varied and complex needs of underrepresented students. See Table 17.1.

Table 17.1. Distinguising Mentoring Roles

Traditional Mentoring	*Networking Mentoring*	***Transformational Mentoring***
One-to-one relationships	Group relationships—involvement of three to eight participants with shifting roles	One-to-one relationships and group relationships
Hierarchical power relationship	Deemphasis of hierarchy and power in relationship	Deemphasis of hierarchy and power in relationship
Unidirectional benefits in terms of giving and receiving	Mutuality of benefits	Mutuality of benefits
Trait-based matching emphasized	No emphasis on trait-based matching	No emphasis on trait-based matching

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Table 17.1. Distinguising Mentoring Roles (Cont.)

Traditional Mentoring	*Networking Mentoring*	*Transformational Mentoring*
Primary focus on personal and vocational support	Primary focus on personal and vocational support	Primary focus on intercultural awareness and respect Secondary focus on personal and vocational support
No mentoring facilitator	Mentoring facilitator	Mentoring facilitator
Goal: assimilation into mainstream work, business, or school culture	Goal: provision of access to system possessing resources or rewards sought by underrepresented groups	Goal: provision of access to system possessing resources or rewards sought by underrepresented groups
Mentoring practices vary from non-structured to tightly prescribed	Mentoring practices adhere to a flexible structure prescribed by facilitator	Mentoring practices adhere to a systematic structure prescribed by facilitator

MENTORING UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH

As the result of 16 weeks of a mentoring intervention, adolescents who had been labeled as "at risk" demonstrated remarkable growth and promise. The student sample, which was drawn from a charter middle school population in Louisiana, the nation's poorest state, was comprised primarily of young adolescents who had either resisted or failed to comply with the norms and expectations of traditional school cultures. Many of the students had experienced both behavioral and academic challenges. They represented academic placement classifications ranging from gifted and talented to learning disabled. All of them had been expelled from other public middle schools; over 90% were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches; approximately 50% resided in single-parent homes; and nearly one-third were intimately acquainted with the juvenile justice system.

Contradicting the norms associated with risk, the adolescents exposed to transformational mentoring experienced substantial improvements, especially in comparison to their traditionally mentored peers. Youngsters in the transformational group were shown to have somewhat better attendance than their peers in the traditional group. As well, students in the transformational group had fewer tardies, and sustained fewer and/or less severe disciplinary infractions during the intervention. Therefore, they spent fewer days in both in- and out-of-school suspensions. Beyond that, students in the transformational mentoring group outperformed their traditionally mentored peers across content areas. Consistently, students in the transformational group experienced gains in mathematics, English, and reading from the first quarter to the second. Students in the traditional group, however, experienced losses in math, English, and reading grades from the first to the second quarter. Evidently, the quality and content of mentoring visits made a substantial impact on students' school-related outcomes.

Research has indicated that students who experience a sense of belonging, the accomplishment of goals, and/or fun at school are more likely to stay in school (Eccles, 1983; Tucker, 1999). Apparently, students' desire to attend school consistently and to conduct themselves appropriately was positively affected by their engagement with mentors in the culturally sensitive mentoring experience, which placed special emphasis on self-efficacy, intercultural awareness, and adaptive skills. It is possible also that proteges acted on an impulse to please and impress those adults they deemed significant. These findings are of educational significance in that disadvantaged youth drop out of and are excluded from school at alarming rates. Also, mentoring interactions offered students a range of opportunities to engage in behaviors typically valued and reinforced in classroom settings, such as verbal competence, critical thinking, problem solving, and prosocial interactions. After all, empirical research has found the attainment of adaptive skills by students (particularly African American students) to predict grade point averages (Tucker et al., 1995). Moreover, respondents' participation in culturally relevant and culturally responsive activities such as those that characterize the transformational mentoring treatment condition likely promoted proteges' positive self-representation, in turn instilling in them a sense of self-efficacy (Tucker, 1999).

CONCLUSIONS

The adolescents in Causey's (2000) study, like so many youngsters across America, belonged to a school system that had determined that they were at risk, high risk, of not succeeding in the public school context. As such, they were enrolled at Louisiana's first charter school, a facility designed specifically to accommodate youngsters who had been expelled from traditional public schools due primarily to discipline-related offenses. Yet, with the guidance and nurturing of culturally conscious and caring mentors, they were able to demonstrate great promise, both academically and behaviorally. It is a well-known and accepted fact that attempts to transform notions of culture, power, and self typically require longer-term efforts. Yet, in only 16 weeks, these youngsters were able to evidence tangible improvements.

We, as a society, must come to acknowledge that the "at-risk" adolescents who serve as the meat of our statistical reports of educational and social decline are "at promise" for transforming the social order of our world. We have a responsibility to ensure that they are allowed access to the tools that will ensure that their impact on our world will be positive rather than negative. America is not color blind, nor does it have amnesia. We must remember and keep

> ...the promise first made on this continent: All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 115)

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CHAPTER 18

WHY ARE THERE SO FEW AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

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The low percentage of African American students in gifted and talented (GT) programs has been highlighted by a number of researchers over the past 15 years (e.g., Baldwin, 1985; Ford, 1996, 1998; Plummer, 1995; Robinson, Bradley, & Stanley, 1990). In 1992, when African Americans made up approximately 21% of public school enrollment, their enrollment in GT programs was only 12% (Ford, 1998). In fact, Ford (1998) indicated that through the 1980s into the early 1990s, African American underrepresentation in GT programs ranged from 41% to 57%, and she argued that "gifted programs are the most segregated educational programs in this nation" (Ford, 1995, p. 52). Although these figures are not new, they are still staggering. Moreover, despite the number of researchers and educators who cite these statistics and lament about the problem, these figures have not changed substantially over the last three decades. It is clear that the solution is not one that is obvious or easily attainable. However, before proceeding further, what exactly does "gifted" mean?

Surmounting All Odds, pages 423–454
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WHAT DOES "GIFTED" MEAN?

This question is one that has no definitive answers to date, although there are no shortage of opinions on the subject. An overview of some of these definitions of giftedness provides a useful starting place for this discussion. Sternberg and Davidson (1986a) edited a volume that provided "17 different conceptions of the [gifted] construct" (Sternberg & Davidson, 1986b, p. 3). They divided the volume into four sections, grouping together definitions that appeared to have basic similarities. The first section of their text highlights five "implicit theories...[that is,] definitions that lie within the heads of the theorists...and cannot be empirically tested" (p. 3). Table 18.1 contains a list of the definitions of giftedness from the explicit theories. Three of the five definitions (Feldhusen, 1986; Gallagher & Courtright, 1986; Tannenbaum, 1986) focus on the capacity for extraordinary performance, and the other two (Haensly, Reynolds, & Nash, 1986; Renzulli, 1986) address the elements that result in giftedness, including ability and commitment to develop the ability.

Table 18.1. Implicit Definitions of Giftedness

Author	*Definition*
Feldhusen	A disposition for outstanding learning and performance in children and for outstanding achievement or performance in adults.
Haensly, Reynolds, & Nash	Giftedness is the outcome of an interaction among abilities that have successfully coalesced, a setting that allows for and encourages the expression of those abilities, obstacles that hone or refine the expression of those abilities, and commitment that allows the expression to be fully developed.
Gallagher & Courtright (1986)	Giftedness is the capacity for high performance in the following arenas: intellectual, academic, leadership, visual and performing arts, and psychomotor.
Renzulli (1986)	Giftedness is the product of the interaction among above-average ability, task commitment, and creativity.
Tannenbaum (1986)	Giftedness denotes an individual's potential form producing knowledge that benefits humanity.

Note: Definitions are paraphrases of the definitions presented in Sternberg and Davidson (1986a).

Sections two and three of the text describe explicit theories—theories that can be tested empirically—that are grounded in cognitive theory and developmental theory, respectively. The cognitive definitions all emphasize some aspect of cognitive processing, including metacognition (e.g., Jackson

& Butterfield, 1986), metamemory (e.g., Borkowski & Peck, 1986), insight (e.g., Davidson, 1986), or general superior cognitive functioning (e.g., Sternberg, 1986). In contrast, the developmentally based theories emphasize the development or emergence of giftedness over time as well as the role of the environment in developing individuals' gifts (e.g., Albert & Runco, 1986; Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1986; Feldman, 1986; Gruber, 1986; Walters & Gardner, 1986). Many of the theories, both implicit and explicit, acknowledge the importance of the appropriate setting for the development of giftedness. The final section contained two chapters that deal with giftedness in specific domains, namely mathematics (Stanley & Benbow, 1986) and music (Bamberger, 1986). Sternberg and Davidson's (1986a) book is not the only one in this vein (see, e.g., Friedman & Rogers, 1998).

Whether implicit or explicit, cognitive or developmental, the definitions indicate or imply that giftedness is manifested in some performance or achievement that is valued in a particular societal context. Moreover, most of these authors believe that giftedness is evident in childhood, although a gifted child will not necessarily be a gifted adult. In the implicit section, Tannenbaum's (1986) psychosocial theory exemplifies these two themes. He argued that giftedness denotes children's "potential for becoming critically acclaimed performers or exemplary producers of ideas in spheres of activity that enhance the moral, physical, emotional, social, intellectual, or aesthetic life of humanity," but he made a clear distinction between the "rapid learning of ideas...[that is] consuming knowledge," which often occurs in childhood through schooling and "producing knowledge with great inventiveness and impact, which is a sign of giftedness, [and which] comes later in a person's growth cycle" (p. 33). Nothing inherent in any of these definitions suggests directly that one ethnic group is more likely to be gifted than another. However, the emphasis on the setting or the context in which giftedness develops does suggest some hypotheses addressing that question.

WHY SO FEW AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS?

Given that one overarching theme in the definition of giftedness is "of value to society," it is not surprising that African Americans have been historically excluded from GT educational programs in the United States. Despite the tremendous importance of education to African Americans, even before the abolition of slavery, there were consistent and considerable efforts to avoid providing education to generations of Blacks. Many of these educational inequities were clearly articulated during the civil rights era and the events leading up to and including the landmark *Brown versus* *the Board of Education* decision in 1954. If society does not believe that African Americans can benefit from basic education, that society will not believe that Blacks can possibly be gifted. Similarly, if society does not want Blacks to profit from the obvious advantages that literacy and numeracy provide, society will certainly avoid providing enriched educational opportunities, especially to the most capable Blacks who will then become the biggest threat to the status quo (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.; Malcolm X).

In spite of the progress that has occurred in the African American community since the 1960s, Blacks are *still* underrepresented in GT programs (Ford, 1996, 1998). Additionally, one can argue that this underrepresentation in GT programs for students who are in the K–12 system is directly related to the dearth of African Americans in tertiary education programs leading to degrees and the overabundance of African Americans in prison or on probation. A variety of factors have been put forward to explain the underrepresentation of African Americans and other minority groups in GT programs. Some of the more important factors include identification practices for GT programs, teacher recommendation bias, underachievement by African American students, and the definitions of gifted that are used in schools (Baldwin, 1985; Ford, 1995; Hagen, 1980; Melesky, 1985).

Identification

The identification of minority students for GT programs has probably generated the largest amount of scholarly comment in this field (e.g., Bireley, 1995; Ford, 1995; Ford & Harris, 1991; Harris & Ford, 1991; Maker, 1996; McKenzie, 1986; Passow & Frasier, 1996; Wright & Borland, 1993; Yancey, 1983). GT programs are advanced educational programs and from the early 1900s, GT education has been linked to the construct of intelligence and high scores on a standardized cognitive measure (e.g., Terman, 1925). Given that the distribution of intelligence as measured by the traditional tests results in a bell-shaped curve, many school districts adopted an IQ score of 130 as the sole criterion for admissions into GT programs. The use of the cut score was not irrational. A score of 130 provides a clear-cut means of identifying students who are in the top 2.5% of the population (i.e., 2 standard deviations above the mean) to receive GT services.

However, this practice has been criticized from a number of viewpoints. First, even though IQ scores are related to academic achievement and occupational status (Brody, 1997), IQ accounts for, at most, 50% of the variability in achievement (Jensen, 1998). In other words, 50% of the variability in achievement is due to factors other than IQ. Thus, using IQ as the sole criterion for GT placement introduces a selection bias. Additionally, the relationship between IQ scores and schooling is reciprocal (Ceci & Williams, 1997). In other words, IQ may lead to greater amounts of education, but greater amounts of education also result in increases in IQ. Thus, the selection bias introduced by using IQ as the sole criterion for extra education is heightened as the extra schooling enhances the IQ of the people receiving extra schooling, making them more likely to be selected on the basis of IQ scores at some future date.

Second, research now indicates that the number of years that individuals attend school is "highly heritable" (Ceci & Williams, 1997, p. 105). This finding suggests that students of highly educated parents have an advantage before they even encounter the school system:

> Children who grow up in families with a history of success in school have learned many sets of lessons required for academic success—even before they enter kindergarten. Not only are such students usually unaware that they have "learned" these lessons, but schools treat these lessons as if they were "natural" to all academically talented students. Consequently, those students who have not prelearned these lessons are, almost certainly, not going to be taught them in school. Pupils who attend school without benefit of these prelearned lessons are likely to be told, over and over again, that they do not have the stuff of which school success is made, without ever being told that such "stuff" is learned. On the face of this reality, it should surprise no one that it quickly becomes irrelevant how bright less-advantaged students are. (Worrell, Szarko, & Gabelko, 2001, p. 81)

The preceding argument suggests that GT programs can too easily become domains where the rich inevitably get richer. Moreover, students who do not get the opportunity to participate in GT programs are less likely to qualify in the future, as are their children, and so on. The lack of participation by African Americans in GT programs create stereotypes of the gifted and nongifted, which further calcify the system.

A third concern with using IQ tests as the sole criterion is related to measurement error. Despite the numerous studies on the reliability and validity of scores on IQ tests, there are few who will claim that IQ scores are error-free. In fact, IQ test total scores are as psychometrically sound as they are in part because they sample across multiple domains. Using this same logic, it makes no sense to predict a complex behavior such as achievement with one criterion, and entry into GT programs should be based on a variety of measures to allow us to maximize our ability to identify appropriate students.

The fourth and final concern is also related to using multiple criteria to increase accuracy of prediction. Whether or not you accept the contention that traditional intelligence tests are biased against African Americans, it is clear that African Americans perform less well on these tests. Furthermore, it has been adequately demonstrated that the environment has a greater impact on intelligence than originally theorized (e.g., Jensen, 1969), as demonstrated by the shrinking gap in IQ scores between Blacks and Whites (Neisser et al., 1996), and the societal gains in IQ scores over the course of the 20th century (Dickens & Flynn, 2001; Flynn, 1999; Neisser, 1998).

In summary, IQ is positively influenced by years of schooling and by certain household characteristics, both of which occur less in the African American community. Moreover, this influence is cumulative over generations, and research indicates that IQ only predicts half of the variability in achievement scores. Finally, African Americans obtain lower scores on average on these tests. One conclusion that can be drawn from these facts is that using IQ as the sole criterion for placement in GT programs is inherently unfair to all, with a disproportionately negative effect on African Americans. It is also hard not to conclude that anyone who currently recommends IQ as the sole criterion for GT placement does not have the welfare of the African American community in mind. The U.S. Department of Education acknowledged this concern by specifying that placement in gifted and talented programs should be based on multiple criteria.

Recruitment

The selection bias that begins and is perpetuated by using IQ as the only criterion has direct implications for recruitment into GT programs. Typically, requests for GT placement consideration come from teachers, as they are in the best position to see how a student engages with curriculum. Thus, they are positioned to observe characteristics of students that are related to academic success (e.g., ability, persistence, passion for a topic) and to encourage and recruit students who might benefit from GT programs. However, teachers are also most likely to be affected by the status quo at their school sites. If the students who are typically recommended and who actually enter a school's GT program have particular characteristics (e.g., middle class, White), the representativeness and availability heuristics (Myers, 2001) almost guarantee that students with similar characteristics are the ones likely to be recommended for GT placement in the future.

An example may be helpful here. In the spring of 2001, a friend asked if his nephew who was in high school could attend the gifted summer program with which I work, and I assured him that the young man could. However, when the young man's parents asked a teacher to complete the recommendation form as a part of the application process, the teacher glanced through the program brochure and told the parents that their son would not be successful. This was a teacher that the adolescent and his parents liked and respected, and she has been very supportive of this young man's educational endeavors. The parents believe and are probably correct in their belief that the teacher was being honest, and the family never completed the application process. I believe that the teacher, in looking at the brochure, focused on the most difficult courses. Her knowledge of the young man and her stereotypes of gifted students led her to conclude that this student would not be successful in a GT program. Even if the young man could have succeeded, a well-intentioned teacher stymied his participation in the program.

Underachievement

A number of researchers identify underachievement as a factor in the low participation rates of African Americans in GT programs (Davis & Rimm, 1989; Ford, 1995, 1998). Proponents of this view contend that many gifted students do not display their giftedness in schools for a variety of reasons, and in fact make up 10–20% of the high school dropout population. While the concept of underachievement is often discussed, it "is still vaguely defined in the professional literature" (Reis & McCoach, 2000, p. 166), and is thus easy to dismiss. To conclude that someone is an underachiever, we must have precise measurements of what they *can do* and what they *are doing*. Reis and McCoach (2000) reviewed the multiple definitions of underachievement and lamented about the lack of consistency in defining this construct. Thus, it is difficult to identify underachievement, as we have no reliable or valid measures of this phenomenon.

However, there are other reasons not to dismiss the concept of underachievement prematurely. These include a number of motivational phenomena such as *oppositional identity* (Ogbu, 1978; Ogbu & Simons, 1998), *acting White* (Cook & Ludwig, 1998; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986), and *preservation of self-worth* (Covington, 1992; Covington & Teel, 1996). All of these concepts suggest that underachievement can be a result of an active decision made by students. Ogbu's (1978) basic contention is that there are fundamental differences or discontinuities between the culture of the schools and the culture of involuntary minorities such as African Americans. These discontinuities lead students to resist the efforts of schools and choose not to perform school tasks well. Some writers (e.g., Fordham & Ogbu, 1986) have contended that students who may be willing to assimilate or for whom education is more salient than discontinuity have to contend with being harassed or ostracized by peers who perceive their academic success as acting White and betraying their Black heritage. Thus, peers may provide another potent incentive for potential underachievement.

Covington's (1992) explication of preservation of self-worth is a third potential explanation for actively underachieving. In schools, as in society, effortless achievement is adulated. In fact, the excessive response to apparent effortlessness led in part to the articulation of the talent development perspective, which will be discussed in the next section. "She has a gift for languages" or "He got his mathematical talent from his father" are phrases that convey the message that superior performance is born full-blown, and not developed (Weinstein, 1996). Ironically, not only is this message incorrect—giftedness in any field will not develop without some effort—it is also damaging because the message suggests that students who have to work hard are worth less than those who do not have to expend as much effort. Thus, students preserve their self-worth by not studying in the belief that it is better to not study and to fail than to study and to get a low grade. The former choice provides an unambiguous external excuse for failure, whereas the latter brands the student as one who is not "gifted" in a particular area.

In addition to the reasons that students may *choose* to underachieve, there are some reasons for underachievement that may not be consciously controlled. The most evident of these is Steele's (1997) concept of *stereotype threat.* Steele and others (e.g., Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn, & Steele, 2001; Osborne, 2001; Steele & Aronson, 1995, 1998; Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, & Darley, 1999) have demonstrated in a number of studies that African Americans who are performing in situations where negative stereotypes of Blacks are evoked showed significantly decreased scores in comparison to other African Americans performing the same task outside the purview of the stereotype. Steele argued that many aspects of testing situations in schools have the potential to evoke the stereotype and result in lower performance. Although the effect sizes in the studies are small and replications have not yet been conducted in regular classrooms, the findings have been consistent. The recent demonstration of a stereotype facilitation effect in Asian American students (Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999) when the model minority stereotype was evoked suggests that this phenomenon is certainly in need of greater study. The concept of stereotype threat, coupled with new research (Weinstein, 1996) that suggests teacher expectation effects may be cumulative across years of schooling, raises a host of issues that can lead to decreased performance of African American students in educational settings.

The possibility of deliberate underachievement among gifted African American students is particularly disturbing, given the consistent reports of poor performance about African American students in general and males in particular. However, choosing to underachieve may be encouraged by entrenched societal beliefs that gifted students do not have to work hard.

GIFTEDNESS VERSUS TALENT DEVELOPMENT

In fact, one of the recent debates in this area is about terminology—should students be identified as gifted or should we focus on students developing their talents? Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences fueled the debate since many of the areas that Gardner identifies as intelligences (e.g., musical, intrapersonal intelligence) are more readily conceived of as talents. The use of the term *gifted and talented* education also suggests that the two are distinct areas.

The United States encourages competition and rewards individuals who stand out in their respective fields. Furthermore, these rewards for outstanding performance are often limited to a select few each year. As I write this chapter, the media are reporting on the awarding of the trophy to Venus Williams in the women's final at Wimbledon. Football teams name a single individual as the "most valuable player" in each game. Gold medals in the Olympics, Super Bowl rings, Pulitzer prizes, and Oscar statuettes are only a few of the many rewards that are given to the "best" in specific categories each year. Many people believe that these individual rewards recognize giftedness and they do. Moreover, as much as society loves the underdog to win, society often reserves special honors for the Michael Jordans and Michael Jacksons of the world who make outstanding performances in their respective fields look effortless.

Music historians (e.g., Davies, 2001; Eisen & Sadie, 2000; Rosselli, 1998; Wyn Jones, 1998) tell us that Beethoven spent a lot of time writing, rewriting, and editing his compositions, whereas Mozart often wrote his compositions with little need for correction. Although some people may prefer one of these two composers' efforts, there are probably few who would contend that Mozart was gifted and Beethoven was not. In this particular instance, ease of production is not confused with the quality of the final product. Historians also tell us that both of these musicians invested lots of time in developing their musical talent, and that the apparent ease with which Mozart composed owed as much to nurture as to nature. Although modern media ensures that the public sees the contributions that gifted individuals are making to our society, news organizations seldom showcase the long and arduous hours that these superstars invested to develop their talent and give us *effortless* performances.

I contend that a talent development framework, which recognizes individual gifts while emphasizing the importance of appropriate opportunities for learning and growth, is a more accurate explanation for outstanding performance in any field. If neither of the two Michaels mentioned earlier had devoted time to developing their talent, their potential for greatness in their respective fields would not have manifested. From Paul Robeson to Kathleen Battle, or from George Washington Carver to

Tiger Woods, individuals who are perceived as extremely gifted by society invest a lot of time and effort in developing their gifts or talents. Thus, one of the fundamental messages for African American educators and youth is that giftedness as an adult is the end product of a rigorous talent development process in childhood and adolescence. Perhaps more stories about how early Tiger Woods began practicing golf are in order.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Schools have been criticized for their failure to provide quality GT academic programs (e.g., Gallagher, 2000), and for their limited view of talents (Gardner, 1983). However, even our most competent regular education teachers are not prepared to teach music, drama, dance, or painting to individuals who are gifted in these areas. And even if they were, our current school system does not have the time built in for these subjects. If schools are expected to identify and educate potentially talented students in areas other than the academic, society must provide additional resources for schools in these areas. This notion is not as far-fetched as it may seem. For example, there is one nonacademic area in which our schools do a tremendous job of identifying talent, developing talent, and producing gifted adults. Consider the tremendous amount of resources that our society expends at the secondary and tertiary education levels in preparing individuals for the NFL and the NBA. Consider the breadth of participation that the resources that are expended allow, so that colleges and professional leagues are drawing talented players from poor rural and urban schools as well as from the more affluent suburban counterparts. Each year, the NFL and NBA drafts demonstrate that if a society values a particular area of talent, that society will provide the resources to develop the valued talent in its youth.

Although it may be too much to expect schools to play a major role in the development of nonacademic talents, why are they not doing a better job in the area of academic talent development? The reasons for this are multiple. First, although GT education is specified in the federal education code, the federal government does not provide funds to school districts to support GT programs. Without a guaranteed and mandated revenue source like special education, GT programs ore often the last to be allocated resources in many districts and the first to get cut when budgets are being tightened. The media over the last few years have reported on teacher shortages in urban districts like Los Angeles and New York, and other districts with large African American populations, and teachers' colleges are hard-pressed to supply enough regular education teachers for these districts. Thus, many teachers are teaching with emergency credentials. One New York City district interviewed prospective teachers in the Caribbean in the spring of 2001 in an attempt to find the number of teachers that they needed for the 2001–2002 school year.

Research has also stymied GT programs in the school system. Educational researchers have told schools that ability grouping or tracking is often ineffective, but also detrimental (e.g., Gamoran, 1986; Hacker & Rowe, 1993; Mills & Durden, 1992; Slavin & Braddock, 1993). The argument is that classes benefit from having the higher achieving students in them because they serve as role models for the whole class. This argument often finds public support, as gifted education is not available to everyone and is easily labeled elitist and nondemocratic (Slavin & Braddock, 1993). However, just as we know that some students benefit from a slower pace and more individualized instruction, there are also clear data that support the positive effects of ability grouping on gifted students (e.g., Kulik, 1993; C. C. Kulik & Kulik, 1982; J. A. Kulik & Kulik, 1987; Lando & Schneider, 1997). Moreover, Gallagher (1993) argued that ability grouping should be treated as an educational rather than a social issue.

Two other findings are of import here. Slavin (1987) conceded that ability grouping was effective in some subject areas (e.g., reading) and argued for having students be ability-grouped for those subjects but remain in heterogeneous classrooms for most of the school day. Rogers (1993) indicated that gifted and talented students should receive sustained periods of instruction for maximal benefits, as opposed to the short pullout programs that are currently the norm (Gallagher, 2000). These data indicate that for GT programs to work well in schools, structural reforms are necessary around the question of length of periods for instruction and flexible grouping strategies across the school day. It is quite evident that most public schools are not structured to provide quality GT education (Gallagher, 2000) and will not be for some time. Furthermore, many predominantly African American school districts are struggling to find regular education teachers, and do not have the wherewithal to develop quality GT educational programs.

Where then do gifted students find appropriate courses that challenge them? Often, they find these types of courses in after-school and summer programs at colleges and universities (e.g., Duke, Indiana, Johns Hopkins, Penn State, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Connecticut). The location of GT programs in university settings is generally positive. Sosniak (1995, 1998) argued that talent development should not and probably could not be carried out by public schools alone, given the tremendous time commitment that talent development requires. Ford (1995) made a similar argument with specific reference to African American students, and contended that "financial support for learning enrichment opportunities outside of school...would certainly promote success among gifted African Americans whose families are of limited means" (p. 60).

University-based GT programs also have a number of benefits. First, because the programs are based at universities, research is often an integral part of these programs, and research is needed to help address the problem under discussion. Second, university-based summer programs allow students to accelerate in particular subject areas. Third, university-based GT programs often have faculty and courses that are not available to students in public school GT programs. Fourth, university-based GT programs draw participants from many schools across a number of school districts. Thus, the academic caliber of the average student is higher than in any single school site, and the challenge by this peer group can lead to greater achievement gains than students make in their home schools with less competitive peers (Kulik, 1993; Lando & Schneider, 1997). Fifth, university-based programs are not constrained by state-mandated curricula and the same time constraints as the public schools. Finally, in addition to the advantages outlined above, universities may not carry the same negative emotional loading that schools may have for many African American students, and these students need to feel at home in university settings and see them as a natural, normative, and necessary part of the education process.

The following excerpt is from a letter written by a male student who feared that the group of students that he associated with would be prohibited from returning to a summer GT program (called SP) because of a disciplinary infraction. Although this particular student is not African American, the sentiments expressed are similar to those expressed verbally by other Black students in the past:

> I have been at SP for three consecutive years. As you can see, I enjoy the program, and I do not want it to dissolve or for my experience to end this soon. I have two more summers that I desire to spend at SP. As school begins, it is SP that I look forward to. Summer at SP is one of my primary motivations that help me get through school. As a psychologist, you know how important motivation is.
>
> I cannot express how I feel about SP: it is beyond words. Without SP, my life would be eternal nothingness. I would have no interaction, dreams, and most importantly, challenges. I really care about what I do here. My grades and attitude towards my classmates and instructor will prove that. Please. Please do not take what I treasure away from me. The best times of my life has been here, even with the strenuous work.... Coming to SP is more significant than receiving the credits I have strained for. All I can do now is wait and see. (unnamed student, personal communication, July 24, 2001)

What is particularly amazing abut this excerpt is that this young man who describes his life in regular school as something he needs assistance with to "get through" is in college preparatory classes, has test scores above the 90th percentile, and a grade point average of 4.0. Why should school be such a bleak place for him, or for any other student who is successfully navigating school?

A LOOK AT SOME DATA

Given the small numbers of African Americans attending GT programs, there is a critical need for empirical research on these students. In fact, in recent issues of *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Hébert (2001) and Hébert and Beardsley (2001) published *case studies* of gifted African American males. They argued the field needs to expand its understanding "of the role that environment plays in mentoring giftedness and creativity" (Hébert & Beardsley, 2001, p. 100) and their work suggests their belief that studying gifted African American students warrants investigation at the level of the case study, a research strategy typically reserved for phenomena that are rare or that little information is available about. Ford (1998) supported this contention: "Although concerns about the underrepresentation of gifted minority students have proliferated in recent years, relatively few articles and studies have addressed this topic" (p. 4).

This chapter is, in part, a response to Ford's (1998) call. Ford indicated that research is needed that "examines how and why minority students are underrepresented in gifted education programs" (p. 12). Who are the African American students who are currently attending GT programs and what do they think about the programs they attend? Can conducting research with these students help us be more successful in recruiting and retaining more students? The following section describes a group of academically talented African American students attending a university-based summer program referred to as ASP. The data presented are primarily descriptive. This study represented an initial attempt to examine academic preparation, academic achievement, and attitudes toward an academic summer school in a sample of African American students.

METHOD

Participants

Participants consisted of 589 African American students (66.4% female) who attended an ASP at a university in a western state over a 10-year period from 1990 to 1999. Participants' ages ranged from 7 to 18 ($M = 13.6$, $SD = 11.4$), and they had a mean grade point average (GPA) of 3.3 ($SD = .55$).

The mean percentile ranking for standardized test scores in reading and mathematics were both 70. Participants reported that on average, their mothers and fathers had an associate degree, and family income fell in the $30,000 to $40,000 range.

These participants made up 6.8% of the students who attended ASP over the 10-year period, ranging from 5.6% in 1993 to 8.2% in 1990. As talent development takes time, all students are encouraged to return to ASP until the summer before their senior year. Thus, the total *N* listed above includes newcomers to the program as well as returnees in later years. The return rate for participants ranged from 27.1% in 1995 to 45.7% in 1998 (*M* = 33.9, *SD* = 5.5). ASP also has an active outreach program to recruit minority and low-income participants who have traditionally been excluded from gifted and talented programs (see Worrell et al., 2001, for a more detailed description of the outreach program). Since 1991, over 50% of the African American students in ASP have been recruited through the outreach program and receive financial assistance to participate.

ASP consists of two programs: a three-week program for the elementary grades and a six-week program for the secondary grades. The participants in this study are from the secondary program, which runs during June and July. Students take either one- or two-semester courses from a variety of disciplines, including computer sciences, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, and writing and literature. Students are typically allowed to take only one course in the summer, but approximately 15% of the student body petition and are allowed to enroll in two courses. Students in ASP come from a large geographical area including rural, suburban, and urban school districts and from both public and private schools. One-semester classes meet for two class periods of 3.5 hours per week and two-semester classes meet for three class periods per week. Homework ranges from a low of two hours per class session in some classes (e.g., Beginning Acting) to a high of 10 hours per class session in others (e.g., AP Environmental Science). Students who earn a grade of "B" or above can request that their transcript be sent to their home schools recommending credit, and most school districts in the area give credit for ASP courses.

Acceptance into ASP is based on a variety of criteria, including GPA, standardized test scores, a teacher recommendation, a placement test (for mathematics classes), a work sample, and an interest inventory. As ASP is based on a talent development model, students do not have to be identified as GT in their home schools to be accepted, nor are they excluded on the basis of any single criterion. The mean GPA for all students in ASP across the 10-year period under study was 3.7 (*SD* = .42). On average, program fathers and mothers had four-year degrees and family incomes in the $60,000 to $80,000 range.

Variables Examined

Data for the study were drawn from two sources. Demographic information and information on grades and test scores were obtained from the main ASP database for the years 1990 to 1999 inclusive. The specific variables obtained from the main database included age, sex, GPA at time of application, percentile ranking on reading and mathematics test scores, parents' educational attainment, family income, and grade in the courses that students took during the summer.

Data on attitudes toward ASP were taken from the evaluation database. This database is more recent and includes data from the years 1997 to 1999 inclusive. Students complete anonymous evaluations of ASP in the fifth week, and these data cannot be linked to individual students. Variables from the evaluation database included students' expected grade in the course they were taking and the number of hours that they studied per class period. Data on the number of hours per class period was measured on a six-point Likert scale with the following verbal anchors: 1 = < *1 hr.*, 2 = *1–2 hrs.*, 3 = *3–4 hrs.*, 4 = *5–6 hrs.*, 5 = *7–8 hrs.*, and 6 = > *8 hrs.* Students also responded to five questions on the course that they took. Three of these questions asked students to estimate (a) how much they learned, (b) how challenging was the class they took, and (c) how much they enjoyed the class on five-point Likert scales with verbal and numerical anchors. The last two questions had dichotomous responses, and asked students (a) would they recommend the course they took to friends who had the ability to be successful, and (b) would they return to ASP for another year, if possible.

RESULTS

Participation Rates

Figure 18.1 shows the percentage of African American participation relative to the growth of ASP over time. Each year on the program growth line represents the percentage of students in ASP in relation to the total number of students who attended ASP over the 10-year period. As can be seen, the amount of participants in ASP increases steadily through 1996 and then levels off. However, African American participation is more variable, fluctuating between 6–8%. Moreover, an examination of African American participation by gender (see Figure 18.2) shows that females are attending ASP at almost twice the rate of males. Females make up over 60% of the African American group in 9 of the 10 years.

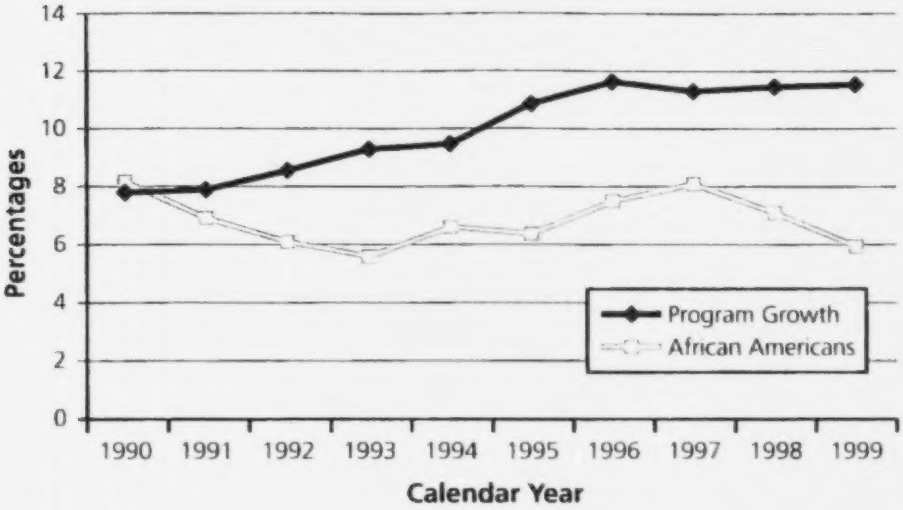

Figure 18.1. Program growth and African American participation rates from 1990 to 1999.

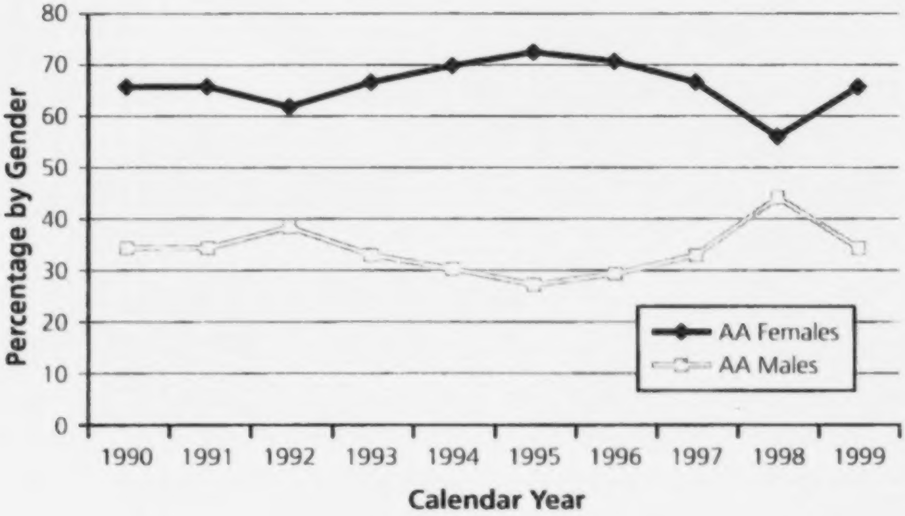

Figure 18.2. African American participation rates by gender.

Admission Criteria

As indicated earlier, admissions are based on a variety of criteria. Figure 18.3 shows African American mean percentile ranks from standardized test scores in reading and mathematics. As can be seen, if either of these two criteria was used as the sole basis for admission, African American participation would be even lower. A cut score at the 90th percentile in reading would exclude 72% of African American participants as opposed to 41% of

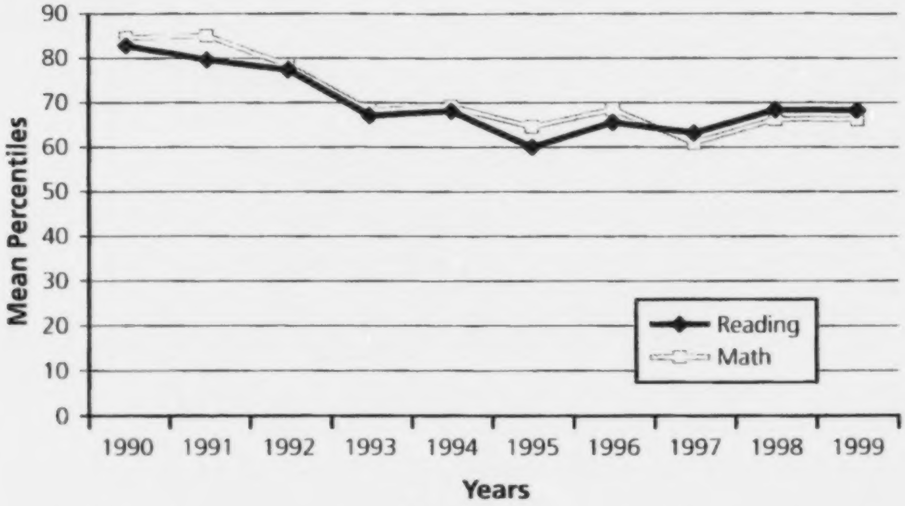

Figure 18.3. Mean percentile ranks on standardized achievement tests of reading and mathematics.

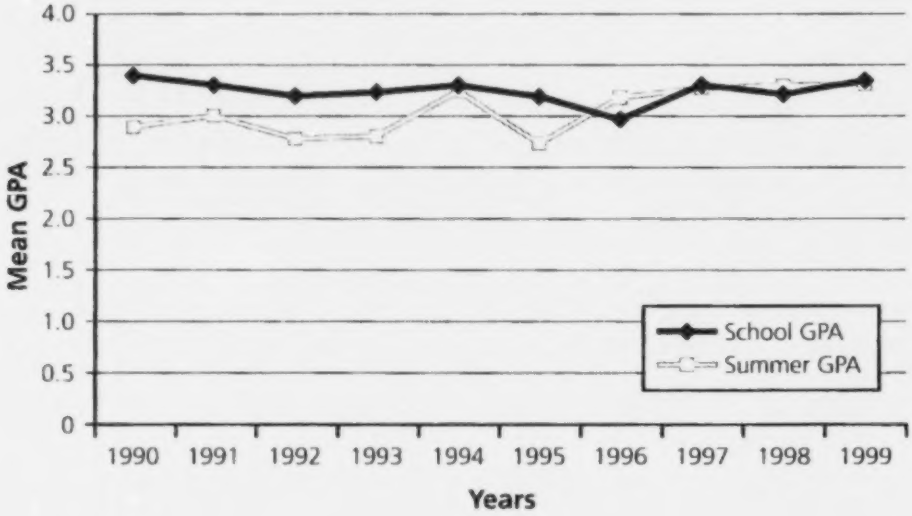

Figure 18.4. Mean incoming and summer grade point averages of students.

non-African Americans. In mathematics, a 90th percentile cut score would exclude 70% of African Americans as opposed to 26% of other students. Figure 18.4 shows the average GPA of students when they apply to the program. If we set 3.5 as a minimum GPA for participation, only 44% of African Americans would qualify for admission versus 88% of non-African American students.

Achievement in Summer Program

Figure 18.4 also contains the summer GPA for students. Summer GPA was calculated using a standard formula for all students: A = 4.0, A– = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, and so on. As Figure 18.2 indicates, although students' summer GPA was lower than their incoming GPA, from 1997, the two GPAs are generally equivalent, with a slight upward trend. This finding is particularly noteworthy for a number of reasons. First, the increasing number (albeit not percentage) of students attending ASP suggests less selectivity in admissions, and this hypothesis is reflected in the decreasing national percentile ranks over time (see Figure 18.3). However, with the possible exception of 1996, there is no equivalent drop in incoming GPA of the students, and summer GPA is aligned with incoming GPA from 1997 forward. Furthermore, the classes in ASP are typically more challenging and more competitive than classes in regular schools, and thus achieving grades that are equivalent to school grades implies that the students are working harder than they do at their home schools.

Data from Program Evaluations (1997–1999)

The data presented in this section are collected from the students themselves at the end of the program. These data are limited to three years, as the relevant questions were not included in ASP evaluations prior to 1997. The response rates for African Americans in the three-year period were 82.3%, 95.7%, and 67.7%, respectively. Data from the program evaluation questionnaires are reported in Table 18.2. Results indicated that many students reported attending at least two years in 1997 and 1999 and three years in 1998. Furthermore, students across all three years reported that they expected to earn at least a B+ in their classes. Students reported median homework scores of 3 (3–4 hours) in all three years.

Participants were asked to compare themselves to the students at their home school and to students in their summer class using the same five-point scale. As Table 18.2 indicates, mean scores for comparisons with home school peers fell between 4 (above average) and 5 (among the best), whereas mean scores with their summer peers fell between 3 (average) and 4 (above average). Paired t-tests indicated that students rated themselves as significantly higher in rank at their home schools than in the summer program in all three years: 1997 t (63) = –4.2, $p < .001$, 1998 t (66) = –4.6, $p < .001$, and 1999 t (38) = –4.9, $p < .001$.

Participants reported on how much they had learned, how challenging their course was, and how much they enjoyed the course on a five-point scale. Mean scores were in the expected directions in all three years. Fur-

Table 18.2. Self-Reported Behaviors and Attitudes from Program Evaluation Questionnaire

	Year					
	1997		*1998*		*1999*	
Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Number of summers attending program	1.6	1.33	2.8	2.80	1.9	1.39
Expected grade (as GPA)	3.5	.55	3.5	.56	3.4	.71
Rank relative to home school peers	4.1	.83	4.2	.91	4.2	.91
Rank relative to summer class peers	3.6	.69	3.5	.91	3.4	.80
How challenging was course	3.8	.85	3.7	.94	3.4	1.00
How much did you learn	3.9	.81	3.8	.90	3.7	.99
How enjoyable was course	3.9	1.05	3.8	.97	3.8	1.07

	% Yes		
	1997	*1998*	*1999*
Will you recommend to friend	89.2	80.6	87.5
Will you return	89.2	70.1	75.0

thermore, modal scores across the three years were 4 (more than expected) for the learning question and for the challenge question (moderately challenging). On the enjoyment question, "4" (a moderate amount) was the mode in 1997 and 1998, and the distribution in 1999 was bimodal with "4" and "3" receiving equal numbers of responses.

Finally, students are asked if they would recommend the course to a friend who had the ability to be successful and if they would return to ASP the following year if they were able to do so. At least 70% responded in the affirmative to both questions in all three years, as indicated in Table 18.2.

DISCUSSION

These data tell us a number of important pieces of information. First, the African American students who are attending ASP come from homes that are less affluent than their peers, with the mean difference being moderate (i.e., .6 *SDs*). The students who are attending also seem to be coming from a talented pool of students—they see themselves as being among the best at their home schools—and they are recognizing that their peers in the summer program are more competent academically than their home school peers. In spite of test scores and school achievement that are lower than the traditional GT student profile (test scores above the 90th percentile and GPA above 3.5), these students are passing their classes. Moreover, they report learning a lot, being challenged, and enjoying the classes, such that a substantial majority would recommend the class that they took and would return to ASP in the future.

If one accepts these results as accurate for this program, one question that must be asked is why the number of African American students is not increasing. In answering this question, some familiar themes emerge. These include (a) recruitment and retention in an era of choice; (b) the need for targeted education for teachers, parents, and students *about* GT programs and *how to choose* students and programs; and (c) a more focused research agenda as suggested by Ford (1998).

Recruitment and Retention in an Era of Choice

It is perhaps not surprising that African American participation rates in ASP are about one-half to two-thirds the participation rate in school-based GT programs (Ford, 1998). ASP is fee-based although financial aid and scholarships are available, and it takes place during the summer when many students do not wish to participate in educational activities. Nonetheless, the figure is startling and potentially disheartening until one considers a number of possible explanations.

Do they know that ASP exists? This question may seem far-fetched. However, every year I am asked by at least one parent about how long the program has been in existence. The ASP brochure is mailed to all the schools (public and private) in the surrounding school districts every year, but the program is not announced to everyone. As indicated by my friend's nephew, teachers and administrators make decisions about who the program will be announced to. They may exclude students who they have decided cannot be successful or cannot afford or would not be interested in such a program, rather than announcing the program generally and allowing students and parents to have the opportunity to call, ask questions, and make decisions for themselves. Furthermore, this exclusion or selective advertising of GT programs may also occur with school-based programs.

GT programs that are committed to increasing African American participation will need to adopt more targeted recruitment strategies to get information out to the community, for example, tapping into Black sororities and fraternities that have chapters in the area. The members of these groups are generally college-educated and understand the importance of a college education. African American churches are another potential source that can be tapped for students. Ironically, until I ran the data for this chapter, it had not occurred to me to do an announcement at a church service, although I have spoken to individuals at church about the program. There are a number of other places that recruitment can take place in the form of a personal visit. These include housing project association meetings and majority African American school PTAs. Finally, one can also approach community-based organizations like the Kiwanis and Lions clubs. They can participate by helping to spread the word through their networks and by sponsoring children to attend the programs.

The dilemma of choice. As indicated earlier, talent development in any field requires time both in terms of class length (Rogers, 1993) and in terms of multiple years of involvement (Sosniak, 1990, 1995). Therefore, ASP encourages students to attend the program for a number of years. Sosniak (1995, 1999) also wrote eloquently about the importance of academic communities as a reform strategy in gifted education, and argued that participation in such communities over a period of years is an important component of talent development—look at Tiger Woods in the golfing community, or the Williams sisters in the lawn tennis community, or the Marsalis brothers in the music community. How, then, do you keep students participating in a talent development community?

In some students' minds, they never do stop participating in talent development programs. Table 18.3 contains a listing of 10 programs available in June and July 2001 at one research university in the United States. The last two programs on the list are pretty specialized, focusing on music and plant science, respectively. Without an interest in music or plant science, how does a student choose which of the other eight programs to attend? How does a parent know which one to send their child to? If asked, I am sure that staff across all of the listed programs could argue convincingly that their program is involved in developing talent. However, only two of the programs target gifted students and are staffed and taught by individuals involved in talent development or gifted education.

And what are the ramifications for a student who decides to attend more than one program? Thus, instead of attending one program for six years, the student attends a different program in each of the six years so that he has more entries on his resume for his college application. Is this decision good or bad, and does this student pose a retention problem? These questions are not just academic, and lead into the topic of educating students, teachers, and parents about GT education.

Table 18.3. Summer 2001 Programs at a Major Research University

Name	*Program Description*
Academic Talent Development Program	Enriches academically talented elementary and secondary students by introducing them to advanced studies.
Summer Sessions Program	Accelerates progress toward a university degree by allowing student to get a jump-start on college work.
Math Engineering Science Achievement	Provides intensive academic enrichment for students entering grades 7–12.
Pre-College Academy	Provides high school students with a variety of rigorous courses that prepare them to meet university entrance requirements.
Upward Bound	Increases college acceptance and college graduation for low-income and first-generation high school students.
Upward Bound Math & Science	Increases college acceptance and college graduation in math and science fields for low-income and first-generation high school students.
Environmental Leadership Program	Sponsors students from local high schools for six-week summer courses in environmental sciences and technology.
Young Entrepreneurs Program	Provides entrepreneurial training, mentoring, and academic preparation support for educationally disadvantaged high school students.
Young Musicians Program	Offers intensive college preparatory and career training for musically gifted low-income youth ages 9–18.
Summer Plant Science Camp	Introduces children (ages 5–11) to plant science and helps them to understand the importance of plants to all living creatures.

Targeted Education

Teachers. Teachers play a major role in tapping students for GT programs. Not only are they often the referral source, they also contribute to the data through grades and rating scales. Although early studies (e.g., Gear, 1976; Jacobs, 1971; Pegnato & Birch, 1959) suggested that teachers were not accurate in identifying gifted students, these studies were misleading on two counts: these studies used a single IQ score as the criterion for teacher accuracy, and the rating scales were not behaviorally based. Thus, judging teacher accuracy on these studies is akin to supporting the use of a single indicator like IQ. Furthermore, when behaviorally based rating scales were used, teacher accuracy increased (e.g., Borland, 1978, Renzulli, Hartman, & Callahan, 1971). Before expecting teachers to appropriately refer students for gifted placement, teachers must be educated about what gifted means in their context: what types of behaviors should they be looking for, and are there psychometrically sound instruments that can be used for identification purposes?

For more than a decade, the Gifted Evaluation Scale (GES; McCarney, 1987) and its successor, the Gifted Evaluation Scale—Second Edition (GES-2; McCarney & Anderson, 1998) have been available commercially "as a measure of giftedness which is relevant and meaningful to educational assessment and the educational environment (McCarney, 1987, p. 5). As one of the few GT scales on the market, the GES has been used in many school districts and has been adopted by some as a formal part of the screening for GT placement. However, there has been little research on the instrument. In a recently concluded study, Greenawalt (2000) found numerous problems with the GES factor structure, and the author bluntly concluded, "this study does not support the utility of the GES in assessing students for giftedness" (p. 53).

In an even more recent study, Worrell and Schaefer (2001) examined scores on the Leaning Behaviors Scale (LBS; McDermott, Green, Francis, & Stott, 1999), a teacher-completed instrument of 29 behaviors found to be related to effective learning, in two academically talented samples. Although this instrument was developed for use with students having academic difficulties, Worrell and Schaefer reported that the scores demonstrated "modest evidence of structural validity and strong evidence of predictive validity, suggesting that the LBS may be a useful tool for psychologists to use in obtaining behavioral ratings of students referred for GT programs" (p. 19). Teachers can and must be educated about what to look for and what tools to use in the process of identifying and referring gifted African American children. Scores on both the GES-2 and the LBS must be validated with African American students who are gifted before they can be recommended for use.

Parents and students. Parents and students must also be educated. For example, although enrichment and acceleration and college acceptance are key words in many of the program descriptions in Table 18.3, only two of the programs describe the student participants they are seeking as gifted. The Academic Talent Development Program describes its population as *academically talented elementary and secondary students,* and the Young Musicians Program is targeting the *musically gifted.* One question that parents can learn to ask is what the students who participate in this program are like. Furthermore, parents should be encouraged to look at multiple programs. They can call and get brochures for all of the programs and look at them carefully. How detailed is the brochure and how much information does it provide about the program? Although this process requires more work, it also increases the likelihood that parents will find the most appropriate program for their child.

There are a number of other important lessons for parents and students to learn. One is that talent development takes time, discipline, and sustained effort, as mentioned earlier. Second, students who are extremely talented in a field often require special teachers to succeed, again requiring more parental input and family resources. Sosniak (1990) described how the families of extremely gifted individuals rearrange the lives to accommodate the development of the gifted individual. Another lesson that is an important one for African Americans, particularly at this time, is that you may be a pioneer in a program. I suspect that many of the talented African Americans who are reading these words as adults can remember classes in college or in some special program before college in which there were no other African American students.

A parent contacted me two days after our program began this summer and said to me that his son was concerned because there were no other African Americans in the class. I learned after asking a couple of questions that the young man was in our youngest class, the summer after kindergarten. I also realized that the young man was actively involved in learning and probably had not processed the ethnic origins of his classmates. However, his parents had and the parents and I conversed about the importance of being able to work in diverse environments. I also encouraged the family to bring some friends next year. Social support is as important as academic support in helping nontraditional students survive in GT programs (Worrell et al., 2001) and preparation often helps the first-contact experience be perceived as a positive rather than a negative one. However, although programs can build in social supports, in the actual classes or groups where talent is being developed, students may still be the only one of their ethnic group, and they must learn to not allow that fact to hamper their progress.

A Focused Research Agenda

Ford (1998, p. 11) summed up the situation with regard to a research agenda in these words: "More research and writing are needed to help unravel the complex issues surrounding minority students' underrepresentation in gifted education." I agree with Ford and support the questions that she raises on this issue. However, there are a few additional questions that can be raised. Among African American students and their families, how pervasive is the attitude that participating in GT programs is akin to acting White? How many GT students are actually underperforming simply because they do not like schools? What is the participation rate of students in summer GT programs? If the 6–8% reported in this chapter is representative, where are the other 4–6% of the youth who participate in school-based programs? When one examines all 10 programs listed in Table 18.3, what is the actual rate of participation in university-based summer programs, and does this same phenomenon exist during the school year? In other words, how many of our youth who do not participate in their school's GT programs participate in some sort of talent development program outside of school? Is attending one program for six years rather than six programs for one year each more supportive of talent development? How many students attending programs like Upward Bound would be better served in programs targeted specifically for GT youth? There is a plethora of studies to be conducted in this field that are potentially useful in helping increase African American participation in GT programs.

A REALITY CHECK

The previous pages have made it quite clear that there is much that needs to be done to develop a comprehensive picture of gifted education for African Americans in this country. However, a few cautions are also in order. The first brings back the talent development versus gifted designation. It is clear most African American educators are committed to developing talent in *all* of our youngsters. On the other hand, if gifted means our best and brightest, there must be identification boundaries. When identification criteria are expanded to minimize false rejects (students who will maximally benefit from gifted education), the number of false accepts (students who may not be successful in gifted programs even with adequate academic and social support) also increase. There are many college-bound students who are not gifted and talented. Winner (1997) reminds us that the educational interventions for the moderately gifted and the profoundly gifted may differ. Thus, one of the goals of our research agenda must be to refine our identification procedures over time—not merely to increase the amount of application materials that we examine—and to become more skilled at directing students to the programs that best serve their needs.

Additionally, the lessons learned from working with GT students and programs must be passed on to regular education teachers in public schools. Note the young man who referred to school as "eternal nothingness" even though he is successful by all school-based indicators. What help can be provided to students who are underachieving "mostly because of poor study habits and poor time management" (Ford, 1998, p. 10)? In the debate leading up to ending affirmative action in admissions decisions by the University of California system, a disheartening statistic emerged: less than 1,000 African American students qualified at the time of graduation from high school for the University of California system. What is our contribution to the education of these youngsters?

More recently, the University of California reported a tremendous drop in African American applications. It is my belief that many of the students who did not apply chose their course of action on the assumption that they could not qualify if there were no affirmative action. It is also my belief that a substantial proportion of these students were mistaken in their assumption. Their decision, however, raises a concern that has recently been highlighted by McWhorter (2000). He argued that an integral part of Black identity in the United States involves self-sabotage, anti-intellectualism, and disdain for academic achievement. A related and equally disturbing notion comes from a study by Arroyo and Zigler (1995). They found that middle and high school students who did better in school scored higher on racelessness, suggesting an abandoning of Black identity in the quest for academic achievement. However, there were psychosocial costs, as racelessness was positively related to higher scores on anxiety and depression. The work of these authors reiterates the notion that GT education for African Americans occurs in a social environment with a history and suggests that solutions to some of the problems may need to come from the psychosocial and not the educational realm.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Before I began writing this chapter, I was convinced that *gifted* was a term that I did not particularly want to use anymore. I am no longer so convinced. As indicated previously, talent development can be used to describe a plethora of programs, from programs for the gifted to remedial programs for students who are at the other end of the achievement spectrum. It will be important for writers using talent development in this field to define the population that they are referring to. I have also come away with a larger research agenda than I went into this chapter with. I had not anticipated that in a discussion of gifted African Americans, I would be dealing with issues like oppositional identity and self-sabotage, but gifted education is no less grounded in a societal context than regular education, and may, in fact, be more susceptible to political influences when the group to be enriched is a disenfranchised one. Thus, although I steered clear of politics and political lobbying, gifted education for African Americans will be heavily dependent on resources that are available only from governments and large corporations.

I have used this particular quotation in another article (Worrell et al., 2001), but it is equally appropriate to end this discussion of GT education for African Americans.

> For many individuals, the development of talent seems much a matter of chance. There are fortunate circumstances of birth, and fortunate matches between a child and his or her proximal communities.... Part of our work as educators is to understand how to create conditions that allow ever larger portions of our youth to work toward the development of talent, irrespective of where and to whom they were born. (Sosniak, 1998, p. 12)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was conducted under the auspices of the Academic Talent Development Program, University of California at Berkeley.

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CHAPTER 19

THE DISPROPORTIONALITY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

An Enduring Threat to Equality and Opportunity

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> *It does not matter so much what the thing is called as what the thing is.*
>
> —Carter G. Woodson (1933, p. 200)

Nearly 70 years after the first treatise on the "miseducation" of African Americans in the United States (Woodson, 1933), a more invasive and malignant form of American miseducation—their disproportion in special education programs—continues to threaten the academic achievement and subsequent economic and cultural vitality of millions of African Amer-

Surmounting All Odds, pages 455–485
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ican children, their families, and their communities. A two-decade indictment that disproportionate representation in special education for African Americans is a serious problem, and that it has a deleterious impact on their achievement in both general and special education programs (Heller, Holtzman, & Messick, 1982), stands unchallenged, with few innovations for defining or reversing this educational inequity (Donovan & Cross, 2002). The problem of African American disproportion in special education lives in perpetuity because, perhaps, as Patton (1998) argues, African Americans' disproportionate placement in special education is deeply rooted in a sociopolitical, historical, and educational legacy of continuous and unequal treatment. To date, in nearly every disability category protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; U.S. Department of Education, 1998, 2002), African American students are either overrepresented or approaching overrepresentation. There remains a constant uneasiness that African Americans are at risk for poor quality instruction and educational outcomes in both general education and special education programs.

Concerns about African American achievement in public schools is evidenced further in a recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report (U.S. Department of Education, 2000) that indicates that African American students (along with Hispanic and American Indian students) continue to achieve at levels substantially lower than their White and Asian/Pacific Islander counterparts, especially in reading. For example, 70% of inner-city fourth-grade students are unable to read at a basic level on national reading tests (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). President George W. Bush, arguing for increased accountability for student performance, has stated, "We have a genuine national crisis. More and more, we are divided into two nations. One that reads, and one that doesn't. One that dreams, and one that doesn't." The most recent, and most comprehensive since 1965, school reform legislation, "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001" (Bush, 2001), aims to help close the achievement gap between "disadvantaged" and "minority" students and their peers. The most obvious risk of this historic academic failure for many African Americans and the inability of schools to close the achievement gaps for all children is the referral and placement in special education programs for students with disabilities; that is, student difference, low achievement, and disability become synonymous concepts, expectations, and outcomes. Once placed in special education, however, there is no guarantee that Woodson's "miseducation" will not persist. It is possible that these students will leave school ill-prepared in the most basic academic and social skill development.

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of emerging research and educational practices related to African American disproportionate representation in special education programs in the United States. Specifically, the objectives of this chapter are to (a) define disproportionality and describe the demographics of special education, highlighting the disproportionate representation of African Americans in programs for students with disabilities; (b) examine historical and theoretical underpinnings of African American student underachievement, identification, and placement in special education programs; (c) discuss the disconnect between research-based practices and effective teaching for African American students with disabilities; and (d) provide an overview of emerging research related to referral decisions to place African Americans in special education programs. In this chapter, we use the term *disabilities* or *disability* to refer to the 13 categories of disability as described in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 and focus the discussion on students who are classified as having primarily cognitive, emotional, sensory, and/or physical disorders. We do not use the term *exceptional*, which in the field of special education is an inclusive concept and would include also students with gifts and talents. Although a discussion of African American underrepresentation in programs for the gifted and talented is of equal importance to any comprehensive criticism of the disproportion issue, it is beyond the scope of this chapter.

DEFINING DISPROPORTIONALITY

The explanations for African American disproportionate representation are complex and multifaceted, ranging from academic failure that lies in individual and familial disadvantage (e.g., Jensen, 1969; McWhorter, 2000) to global and ecological factors that precipitate student underachievement and require special education intervention (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Harry & Anderson, 1999; McDermott, 1997; Meyer & Patton, 2001; Oswald, Coutinho, & Best, & Singh, 1999; Patton, 1998). Among the most common etiologies is the interface between ethnicity and poverty and special education placement (e.g., Artiles & Trent, 1997; Harry, 1994; Oswald et al., 1999; Reschley, 1984; Serwatka, Deering, & Grant, 1995; Wagner, 1995). Indeed, "the covariation of poverty and disability is well established" (Fujiur & Yamiki, 2000, p. 188); however, as Oswald and colleagues (1999) noted in their study of 4,455 school districts and more than 24 million students, "After the effects of economic and educational variables were accounted for, the likelihood of being identified as MMR (mildly mentally retarded) and SED (seriously emotionally disturbed) was still significantly influenced by ethnicity" (p. 203). Thus, the effects of race and ethnicity on decisions to refer and place children into programs for special education should be examined vigorously because African Americans of affluence are likewise subject to academic underachievement (Ladson-Billings, 2000) and placement in special education for disruptive behavior and noncompliance (Oswald et al., 1999).

Indeed, the factors influencing special education identification are multidimensional and confounding. For example, some researchers place the blame for African American underachievement on systemic, institutionalized, "savage" inequalities (e.g., Kozol, 1991), while others point to faulty referral and assessment procedures used to identify students for special education services (Gopaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998; Hilliard, 1976, 1992). Also identified as correlates of student underachievement are school-related factors such as school district size, class size, percentage of teachers of color, percentage of certified and uncertified faculty, inadequate school leadership, and lack of parent involvement. Nonetheless, educational theorists and educators maintain that the disproportionality phenomenon persists as a manifestation of teachers' misperceptions and poor understandings of culture-related behaviors and subsequent ineffective instruction (e.g., Delpit, 1995; Gay, 1997, 2000; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Neal, McCray, & Webb-Johnson, 2001; Patton & Townsend, 2001).

These noted theorists and educators, and other scholars of student diversity and multicultural education, have called for a more in-depth understanding of the cultural incongruity between teachers and students and resultant student outcomes. Moreover, according to some scholars, African American student failure remains unabated not as a result of their poverty, poor environments, and lack of experiential conditions, but rather as a function of the reactions to students' poverty and inexperience in the forms of prejudice, power, and privilege—within social structures, curriculum and instruction, and classroom teachers (Day-Vines, 2000; Delpit, 1995; Ewing, 2001; Patton & Townsend, 2001; Tatum, 1997). Such reactions to children's living circumstances ultimately shape educators and institutions' ontology, epistemology, and axiology about the purposes of education and student achievement, and the need for special education services (see, e.g., discussions by Patton, 1998; Patton & Townsend, 2000; Scheurich & Young, 1997). With few exceptions (e.g, MacMillan & Reschly, 1998), many researchers contend that disability labels are "socially constructed" (Artiles, 1998; Harry & Anderson, 1999; McDermott, 1997; Meyer & Patton, 2001; Patton, 1998), artifacts of a western, monocultural system that fails to acknowledge the legitimacy of difference or respond to it with affirmation, respect, and care. As an example, Artiles and Trent (1994), in their explanation of the social construction of the category "mild learning disabilities," suggest that:

> a correlation between ethnicity, school failure, and placement in special education programs has been reported consistently in the literature.... This intri-

> cate interaction of variables has not yet been explained satisfactorily. We speculate, though, that stereotypes about the abilities of children of color are maintained by this correlation, and to some extent perpetuate the placement of disproportionate numbers of minority students in special education classes (p. 422)

In defining disproportionality, scholars, researchers, and policymakers continue to grapple with the complexities of unraveling the entangled factors of race/ethnicity, poor school achievement, and referral and placement in special education programs. However, as Artiles and Trent and others have suggested, underlying the disproportion in special education are professionals' beliefs and perceptions about who is capable of learning and who is not. The historical patterns of African American miseducation, and the resultant displacement in special education, has led many educators to conclude that African American students, particularly those who are from families and communities with low incomes, are less able to benefit from general education. Summarily, such students are disproportionately labeled as disabled and placed in special education programs, absent attention to the influences of culture, race, language, and styles of learning on classroom performance.

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

In 1975 Congress passed legislation mandating free and appropriate educational services for children and youth with disabilities. Since the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997), the number of children and youth receiving special education services across 13 disability categories and age groups has increased significantly (see Table 19.1). The original legislation included children and youth ages 6 to 21, however, subsequent revisions included children and youth ages 0 to 21. Ten to twelve percent of the school-age population (approximately 5.5 million) receives special education services (U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

Although all ethnic and socioeconomic groups have experienced increases in services, there has been persistent and disproportionate growth in specific categories among African American children and youth (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Harry & Anderson, 1999; *Larry P. v. Riles*, 1972; U.S. Office of Special Education, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Educational literature has consistently predicted this growth and cautioned the field about the need for an equitable examination of the issue (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Chenault, 1975; Dunn, 1968; Harry & Anderson, 1994). Moreover, the literature is replete with theoretical and conceptual perspectives of disproportionality (see, e.g., Artiles, 1998; Kea & Utley, 1998; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Valles, 1998) and mathematical formulae for determining the pres-

Table 19.1. Percentage of Students Ages 6–21 Served under IDEA in the 1989–90 and 1998–99 School Years

Category	*1990–1991*	*1999–2000*	*Percent Change*
Specific Learning Disabilities	2,144,017	2,871,966	34.0
Speech and Language Impairments	987,778	1,089,964	10.3
Mental Retardation	551,457	614,433	11.4
Emotional Disturbance	390,764	470,111	20.3
Multiple Disabilities	97,629	112,993	15.7
Hearing Impairments	59,211	71,671	21.0
Orthopedic Impairments	49,340	71,422	44.8
Other Health Impairments	56,349	254,110	351.0
Visual Impairments	23,682	26,590	12.3
Autism	—	65,424	*a/*
Deaf-Blindness	1,524	1,845	21.1
Traumatic Brain Injury	—	13,874	*a/*
Developmental Delay	—	19,304	*b/*
All Disabilities	4,361,751	5,683,707	30.3

a/ Autism and traumatic brain injury were first required to be reported in 1992–93;
b/ Developmental delay for students ages 3–9 was first reported in 1997–98.

ence of disproportionate representation in special education across ethnic groups (e.g., Chinn & Hughes, 1987; Oswald et al., 1999; Reschly, 1984). For the purposes of our discussion, we have applied Chinn and Hughes's (1987) formula in determining the existence of African American disproportionality in programs for individuals with disabilities.

Chinn and Hughes (1987) have suggested that to determine disproportionality, no more than 10% of any given student population should be represented in the special education population. African Americans, for example, represent 17% of the school-age population (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) and, therefore, they should not exceed 10% of their total representation, or 18.7% of any category of special education. Currently, 34.2% of all children receiving special education services for mild and moderate mental retardation and 27.3% of those who receive services for emotional/behavior disorders are African American (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Thus, these statistics are alarming given that African American students make up only 17% of students in public schools (see Table 19.2). Moreover, based on odds ratios, Oswald and colleagues (1999) determined that, depending on the economic status of their neighborhood school, African Americans were 2.5 times more likely to be identified with mental retardation if they attended high-poverty schools and 1.5 times more likely to be classified as emotionally disturbed if they attended affluent schools.

Table 19.2. Percentage of African Americans Ages 6–21 across Disability Categories in Comparison to the Total Percentage of Children Served Under IDEA

Category	*African American 2000–2001 (%)*	*All Students 2000–2001 (%)*
Specific Learning Disabilities	18.4	50.50
Speech and Language Impairments	16.1	19.20
Mental Retardation	34.2	10.80
Emotional Disturbance	27.3	8.30
Multiple Disabilities	20.0	1.98
Hearing Impairments	16.4	1.00
Orthopedic Impairments	14.7	1.00
Other Health Impairments	14.9	4.47
Visual Impairments	18.6	.50
Autism	20.5	1.00
Deaf-Blindness	24.7	.03
Traumatic Brain Injury	16.9	.20
Developmental Delay	30.5	.20
All Disabilities	20.3	

Although the percentages of children receiving special education services continue to increase, the distribution of the demographic profile of individuals in special education has shifted. For example, while it is general knowledge in the field of special education that African American youth are overrepresented in the categories of mental retardation and emotional disturbance, they also experience disproportion in several other disability categories. For the 2000–2001 school year, evidence shows disproportionate representation among African American youth in nine categories. They are overrepresented in six categories (mental retardation, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, autism, deaf-blindness, and developmental delay; see Table 19.3). They were underrepresented in three categories (gifted and talented, orthopedic impairments, and other health impaired). Thus, the overrepresentation trend for the past decade indicates that African Americans may be at risk for disproportionate representation in nearly every special education category. It is interesting to note that the percentages of African Americans in the mental retardation and emotional disturbance categories remain relatively stable. A new category, developmental delay, reflects a 30.5% composition of African American learners. Presently only 22 states report data on children ages 3–9 who experience cognitive and behavioral developmental delays. This category in IDEA is the most recently added and provides special education intervention to children until age 9 without a specific label of disability. By contrast, European Americans are overrepresented in special education only on two occasions in their academic careers—early intervention for developmental delays and by school age in programs under "Other Health Impaired" for attention-deficit disorders (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). There is little indication of reversing these placement trends in the near future.

Table 19.3. Representation of African Americans in General and Special Education

Category	*Student Population (%)*	*Disproportionate (%)*
General School Population	17.0	18.7
Mental Retardation	34.2	+15.5
Emotional Disturbance	27.3	+8.6
Multiple Disabilities	20.0	+1.3
Autism	20.5	+1.8
Developmental Delay	30.5	+11.8
Deaf/Blind	24.7	+6.0
Gifted Programs	8.0	–7.3
Orthopedic Impairments	14.7	–.6
Other Health Impaired	14.9	–.4

Note: + or – indicates the Chinn & Hughes (1987) designated formula noting overrepresentation or underrepresentation.

Hence, is disproportionality in special education a problem for African American children? One final test of the existence of disproportionality in special education was offered by Heller and colleagues (1982), and is applicable to the remaining discussions in this chapter. They indicated that,

> Disproportion is a problem (1) if children are invalidly placed in programs for mentally retarded students; (2) if they are unduly exposed to the likelihood of such placement by virtue of having received poor-quality regular instruction; and (3) if the quality and academic relevance of the special instruction programs block students' educational progress, including decreasing the likelihood of their return to the regular classroom. (p. 18)

If the Heller and colleagues test is applied to current African American representation in special education, then it is obvious that disproportionality exists. First, in spite of an increased special education population, the ethnic and linguistic makeup of students in special education programs has remained virtually unaltered over the past 20 years. Second, African American students are being placed in programs for students with disabilities, even as the field of special education wrestles with locating the "right" tests to assess their cognitive, intellectual, behavioral, and social skill development (Patton, 1998). Some multicultural education scholars (e.g., Gay, 2002) and multicultural special education scholars (e.g., Artiles, 1998; Hilliard, 1992) caution against referral and placement decisions on the basis of faulty assessments. Third, there is increased awareness that neither general education classroom teachers nor special education teachers are adequately prepared to modify curriculum and programs or accommodate for learning and cultural differences. Finally, there is increasing recognition that special education may not be so special for many students and, thus, the likelihood is high that placement in special education is a permanent status with few opportunities for students with disabilities to receive individualized, structured, and explicit learning that is culturally responsive.

Consequently, researchers, theorists, and practitioners are beginning to inquire why African Americans, and particularly males, are disproportionally represented in special education identification and placement practices. What common good is served for placing African Americans with subjective disability in special education programs? What kind of educational treatment and likely outcomes can African Americans expect to receive once placed in special education programs for students with mild, moderate, or severe disabilities? What can be done to reverse a trend that is also yielding incomplete school achievement? These and other such questions are elucidated in contextualized understandings of the historical theories that have created the foundation for inappropriate schooling among African American youth. Also relevant are discussions of contemporary frameworks that attempt to shift research and practice away from deficit paradigms to understandings of cultural differences and the need for culturally responsive modes of inquiry and pedagogy.

HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY THEORIES CONTRIBUTING TO DISPROPORTIONALITY

Hill (1972), White (1972), and McAdoo (1981) asserted that when traditional cultural views, which were developed for European Americans, were applied to African Americans, the result was often the development of theories based on "weakness-dominated" or "inferiority-oriented" conclusions.

These theories and models provide explanations as to why teachers may perceive African Americans from a pejorative view and consequently refer them to special education classes. The pejorative view toward African Americans began during slavery and was reignited during the separate but equal discourse of the 1950s (Deutsch & Brown, 1964; Frazier, 1939, 1950; Moynihan, 1965; Pettigrew, 1964). Deficit theorists provided an impetus for African American students to be viewed as culturally disadvantaged, intellectually inferior, needy, deprived, and at risk. Thus, African American students were placed in special education classes and labeled mentally retarded (Jones, 1974). In this section, we provide a brief overview of the prevailing theories of African American intellect and behavior that have influenced educators' perceptions of African Americans' abilities and need for segregation in the form of special education classes.

The genetically deficient model originated from the writings of de Gobineau's (1915) *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* and Darwin's (1859) *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection.* This model supported the genetic intellectual superiority theory of European Americans and the genetic inferiority theory of African Americans. Galton (1869) believed that African American males were half-witted and made childish, stupid, and simpleton-like mistakes. Terman (1916) used the Binet-Simon intelligence scales to test African Americans and concluded that they were uneducatable. This model still exists today in the writings of Shuey (1966), Jensen (1969), Hernstein (1971), and, most recently, in Herrnstein and Murray's (1994) *The Bell Curve,* which asserts the position that genes play a dominant role in the determination of intelligence.

The mental illness theory was based upon the idea that African American children's behavior was atypical in relation to that of middle-class European American children (Marion, 1981). With the differing values between middle-class teachers and economically disadvantaged students, cultural discontinuity became evident in gender and behavior and social interaction styles (McCandless, 1967). Dent (1967) and McCandless (1967) reported that European American teachers were unprepared to teach African American children and they perceived their behavior as aggressive. When African American males, for example, did not meet the teacher's compliant, docile, and conforming expectations, these students were labeled "unmanageable," and then were referred and placed in special education settings for emotional disturbance (Gaston, 1971; Marion, 1981).

The culturally deficient model challenged the genetically deficient model and relied on environmental factors influencing students' abilities. Katz (1985) and Mays (1985) noted that the culturally deficient model perpetuated the ideas of culturally deprived and disadvantaged African American children. The deficiency model served to perpetuate the myth of African American inferiority by using a medical model approach that blamed African Americans, emphasized pathology, and used European American middle-class values and beliefs as standards for desirable and undesirable behaviors. The focus shifted from a biological condition to the lifestyles and values of African Americans (Baratz & Baratz, 1970; Smith, 1977; Sumada, 1975). "Cultural deprivation" (Reissman, 1962) has been applied to explain the persistent academic underachievement of African Americans. Using this term, theorists posited that many African Americans performed poorly on tests or exhibited deviant characteristics because they lacked many of the advantages of middle-class culture (e.g., nutrition, education, formal culture and language, and books). These deviations in values became equated with a pathology in which African American's cultural values, families, and lifestyles were believed to be inadequate (Sue & Sue, 1990).

The cultural deficit theory focused on resocializing African American students to compensate for presumed sociocultural deficiencies in their knowledge, skills, and upbringing that are thought to be misaligned with the majority culture's schooling and instructional practices. Teachers attempted to change African American students' educational, behavioral, and linguistic competencies to meet European American middle-class expectations (Tharp, 1989). The cultural deficit theory postulated that African American students possessed no relevant cultural knowledge or competence that schools should necessarily build upon, transmit, or preserve, because those traits represented sociocultural deficits that were barriers to school learning and success (Hollins, King, & Hayman, 1994). The cultural deficit theory attempted to reprogram or resocialize African America students to ensure their adaptation to majority school culture and practices (Epstein, 1985).

The cultural difference theory rejected the idea that African American students had cultural deficits. These theorists (Banks, 1973, 1994; Boykin, 1978, 1983; Harry, 1992; Hilliard, 1976, 1987) assert that African Americans have a strong, rich, and diverse culture. African American culture consists of languages, values, behavioral styles, and perspectives that are unique to African Americans, yet beneficial to all Americans. Cultural difference theorists believe many African Americans are not academically successful due to being culturally disadvantaged, deprived, or deficient, but primarily because their culture is different from the culture of the school. Jacob and Sanday (1976) contended when cultural discontinuity existed, misunderstandings and misinterpretations between teachers and students led to open conflict and hostility, with students feeling threatened, misunderstood, educationally disconnected, and resistant to the effects of school.

More recently, Hale (2000), Ladson-Billings (1995), Tatum (1997), Gay (2000), Irvine (2001), and Boykin (1983, 1994, 2001) have added additional dimensions to the cultural difference theory. They charge that African American children and youth are better served when their cultural difference is viewed from an integrity and strength perspective. In fact, Boykin (2001) asserts that "there is systematic character to the cultural phenomenologies of many African Americans from low-income backgrounds" (p. 197). African American youth are more responsive to classroom and instructional interactions that support their ways of knowing and behaving. For example, many African Americans prefer working in contexts that affirm their propensity toward high activity (i.e., verve) and supportive negotiations that lead to the completion of a task (Boykin & Ellison, 1993; Webb-Johnson, 1994). African Americans often display higher academic achievement in such settings (Bailey & Boykin, 2000; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Ellison, Boykin, Towns, & Stokes, 2000).

Through research in early childhood environments, suburban, urban, low and middle income settings, these researchers assert the importance of teachers responding to students "by incorporating elements of the student's culture in their teaching" (Irvine & Armento, 2001, p. 4). These emerging research perspectives hold great promise for reshaping "traditional" research agendas on African American youth in general and special education in particular. Furthermore, they will inform professionals, policymakers, and practitioners in ways that reverse the trend toward disproportionate representation in special education and the dismal academic outcomes that often accompany such placements.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE: IS IT GOOD TEACHING FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

What do educators need to do to improve the academic outcomes of African American youth in special education? Hilliard (1992) asserted, "either our special services must have the high probability of being successful, or there is no need for such services at all" (p. 168). The literature is replete with evidence that special education services foster weak outcomes for most students receiving special education services and that research-based practices are difficult to sustain in classrooms (Elmore, 1996; Gersten, Chard, & Baker, 2000; Klingner, Vaughn, Hughes, & Arguelles, 1999; Vaughn, Klingner, & Hughes, 2000). The disconnect between best practice and classroom practice is especially challenging for teachers of students of color (e.g., Englert & Tarrant, 1995; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1998; McCray & Garcia, 2002; McCray, Sindelar, Kilgore, & Neal, 2002; McCray, Vaughn, & Neal, 2001; Neal et al., 2001; Webb-Johnson, 2003). If special education is indeed void in being special for all children and youth, how, then, will African American students benefit from such service? Clearly what is commonly know as "best practice" or "good teaching" seems to seldom occur in settings with significant populations of African American learners (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Consider, for example, the following snapshot of a typical history lesson on the three branches of government conducted by a certified teacher in a middle school, cross-categorical special education classroom (e.g., students with mild mental retardation, learning disabilities, and behavior disorders/emotional disturbance). As can be seen in this snapshot is a traditional curriculum and the use of instructional pedagogy that is inappropriate and less effective with most African American learners with disabilities.

Scenario

Miss Cooper is an eighth-grade U.S. History teacher in a suburban school. She teaches in a cross-categorical self-contained classroom. Sixteen students are in her 7th period class. They are all African American learners. Shakelia is a 13-year-old female labeled as having a reading-related learning disability. She frequently has difficulty reading from her history text, especially in decoding unfamiliar vocabulary and comprehending main and supporting facts. When given a passage to read aloud in class, she often refuses, indicating that she hates to read. Ms. Cooper recalls, however, that Shakelia has less difficulty reading when permitted to read her favorite book.

LeVar is a 12-year-old male labeled as mildly mentally retarded. He is reading below grade level, and it takes him longer to grasp concepts than other students. Miss Cooper often wonders why LeVar was labeled because he excels in all of his classwork and has plans to attend college. She does, however, become frustrated at times with the wait time needed for LeVar to master information. Although LeVar gets frustrated in class, he remains motivated and wants to get the right answers.

Shannon, a 14-year-old male, has been labeled as emotionally disturbed. He has a tremendous temper. He resists all interventions from adults and openly tells others he "hates" for anyone to tell him what to do. He demonstrates great insight on many topics discussed in class. Even Miss Cooper has noticed that Shannon often inquires about books on the reading lists, asking if he can take some home to read later. However, Shannon seldom completes or turns in assignments.

The class is currently studying the three branches of government. They have been involved in small-group activities highlighting the characteristics of each branch. Today's discussion centers around group leaders giving reports on their progress. Miss Cooper has informed the class that the best presentation will earn the group a special treat. Miss Cooper has been trying to teach the concept of checks and balances. All students are having difficulty with this concept. Miss Cooper is becoming disenchanted with the unit and is considering moving on to a less complex topic. She wonders why she thought *these* students could handle such a difficult task—if only she had prepared those worksheets before class. Everything she has tried has been unsuccessful.

Shakelia stands to give her group's report. She begins, "The legislature writes all the laws. Then they decide if they are legal. For example, they make a law that if you do something three times, you go to jail forever. Then they call the jail and make sure that you are there. The class laughs. Shakelia defends her group's position by stating, "Dawg ya'll, they be checking on them."

LeVar stands to give his group's report. "The judges, you know like Judge Judy, she tells what you owe when somebody is mad with you." There is a long pause. Shannon tells LeVar to hurry up. Miss Cooper says, "Remember class, we need to be patient." There is another long pause. Miss Cooper then asks, "LeVar, wouldn't you like to talk about the Supreme Court now?" LaVar laments, "Miss Cooper you always telling me. I was going to get to that."

Shannon refuses to stand and offers his report from his desk. He yells out, "This is so stupid. Everybody know that the president has all the power and you can't fight the power. All he has to do is push that button on that red phone. He don't care about no checks and balances. He cares about that big jet and making the people who have money richer. A balance of power is on a piece of paper. They say its like the 'UniverSoul Circus'—you got the ring master, he running all the rings. He tell all the brothers and sisters when to come and go. That's the executive branch. Then you have the clowns, they judging all the performances and they be trying to make you laugh in the process. Man, they were the best part. You know they..." Miss Cooper interjects, "Aren't we getting off the topic?" Shannon responds, "There you go tripping again. Why do you interrupt everything I say? And don't you take any points off 'cause I said it in my calm voice, and I used eye contact. On top of that I was quite sincere." He continues his report, "Now like I was saying, the clowns are supposed to be like the interpreters of the laws. Then you have the owners and originators of the UniverSoul Circus. They had that vision thing going, made the road map for all those Black people to get paid? But that is not how our government works. It is supposed to work that way, but I don't see it working that way. And I don't need no treat. You have no idea who was the best group; you don't even know about the UniverSoul Circus." Miss Cooper is overwhelmed.

Later that day, Miss Cooper shared with a fellow colleague her dismay over her students' response to the history unit. She was not sure where she had gone wrong. After all, she had adhered to best practice in special education and implemented teacher effectiveness strategies. In fact, if her special education supervisor had walked in the room, she would have noted that Miss Cooper was indeed following good teaching practices: adequate planning; accommodations with high-interest, low-vocabulary materials; appropriate wait time; multisensory teaching methods using videos and games; varied topics and methods of instruction through lecture, seatwork, group work, class discussions, cooperative learning, positive reinforcement, and rewards; activating prior knowledge; scaffolding through numerous examples; positive behavior supports; and displaying of student work on a bulletin board titled, "You're a Winner." Unfortunately, despite her best intentions, Miss Cooper is at risk for burnout and attrition in this school. Her students are at risk for ineffective instruction, school failure, and eventual dropout. Moreover, they are not likely to receive appropriate, individualized instruction that meets their academic, social, or cultural needs.

Indeed, if African American students with disabilities are to benefit from special education placements, then new paradigms and pedagogy are necessary. Culturally responsive pedagogy has emerged as a promising practice in response to this pervasive need. Culturally responsive teaching can be defined as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (Gay, 2000, p. 29). Moreover, culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) serves as a powerful variable that (a) influences teaching and learning, (b) is compatible with effective teaching research, (c) invites teacher engagement and reflection, and (d) is grounded in high standards and high expectations (Irvine, 2001). With CRP as a paradigm for change, a culturally responsive classroom would be designed to capture what Gay (2000) refers to as power pedagogy.

- It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect student's disposition, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.
- It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities.
- It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.
- It teaches students to know and praise their own and each others' cultural heritages.
- It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools (p. 29).

As the number of African American students and other students of color increases in our public schools over the next several decades, the demand for teachers to develop and embrace cultural competencies increases. Changing demographics obligate teachers to prepare to educate all children, including those who may live in cultures and circumstances unfamiliar to the teachers (Ladson-Billings, 2000, 2001). This is especially critical for African American students with disabilities (Meyer & Patton, 2001; Patton, 1998) whose life chances following their tenure in special education is alarming (e.g., high dropout rates, teenage parenting, unemployment, poor postsecondary school opportunities, high risk for imprisonment, high risk for premature death). As an art, teaching enjoins skill, passion, and conscience. Lacking passion and conscience, any who attempt to educate are mere technicians. Critical pedagogy acknowledges the role and responsibility of conscience. Thus, recognizing the relationships of power and knowledge, the culturally responsive educator confronts inequalities and the positions assigned to others (Giroux, 1992). In Table 19.4, we provide examples of Miss Cooper's traditional responses based on her understanding of best practice in special education settings versus teacher reactions and responses that would be culturally affirming and respective as well as academically appropriate. It is our hope that teacher education programs for both pre-service and in-service teachers begin to incorporate tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy throughout their teacher preparation programs and practica to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills for meeting the academic, social, emotional, psychological, and cultural/linguistic needs of all their students. Teachers can not be held accountable for teaching what they do not know and to students in which they are unfamiliar and uncomfortable.

THE NEED FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE RESEARCH OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Research regarding African American youth is not new to the field of education. The American Council on Education commissioned studies on the personality development of African American youth in the 1930s and 1940s. Sixty years later, society continues to be plagued by the same problems identified in those studies: incomplete success in school, a high rate of unemployment across the lifespan, unequal opportunity, and racial discrimination (A. W. Boykin, personal communication, 2000, 2001; Holliday, 1985). The literature, however, has focused almost exclusively on the African American "urban, low-socioeconomic adolescent and virtually always in narrow and pejorative terms" (Jones, 1989, p. xiii). Most of these studies have been comparative in nature to the achievement of European Ameri-

Table 19.4. Examples of Culturally Unresponsive and Culturally Responsive Teacher Responses

Philosophical Frameworks and Cultural Dimensions	*Unresponsive (Member to Object: Deficit Model)*	*Responsive (Member to Member: Strength Model)*
Cognitive Processing	Miss Cooper believes that students need to think before they speak. She believes that they will benefit from focusing on the specific instructions given. It is apparent that they students have not focused on or used the learning strategies that she has been teaching to them over the entire semester. She shows her frustration because the students are not trying hard enough.	Miss Cooper provides a context and rationale for the assignment. She assesses the students' prior knowledge and ways of knowing to assist them in making critical connections between the new material she is teaching and what they have previously experienced. For instance, she would probe further to find out about "UniverSoul," a concept with which is unfamiliar and affirm Shannon for his astute analogies. She would use this prior knowledge of students to "set the stage" for her plan in teaching the concept of checks and balances.
Oral Tradition	Miss Cooper would admonish each of the students for their use of African American communication, language patterns and slang. She would be aggravated by the outbursts of laughter and interruptions made by the students. In fact, she would problem discipline LaVar and Shannon for challenging her authority. She believes that good, well-managed students should raise their hands to speak and to take turns.	Miss Cooper would affirm students for the rich and lively modes of expression. She would affirm the "call and response" modes of interactions, especially when the learners are affirming each other. She would model for her students mainstream English that is more accepted, and practiced, in the school context, but not at the expense of believing or saying that the students are incorrect in their oral responses. She would discuss with the students various modes of communication, including the pragmatics of language and effective communication styles, and use techniques such as role playing to illustrate language use and communication styles in a variety of contexts and with various people-to-people interactions.

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Table 19.4. Examples of Culturally Unresponsive and Culturally Responsive Teacher Responses (Cont.)

Philosophical Frameworks and Cultural Dimensions	*Unresponsive (Member to Object: Deficit Model)*	*Responsive (Member to Member: Strength Model)*
Expressive Individualism and Verve	Miss Cooper is very accepting of LaVar's behavior. She believes his behavior is inappropriate but culturally accepted. She knows that he is a conscientious student, but that his frustration is unnecessary given that she and the class have to wait on his responses frequently. She has decided to overlook his mild outbursts questioning her authority. He should be grateful that she is willing to wait and to disregard his inappropriate attention-seeking behaviors. His teacher from last yeas has mentioned to her on several occasions how happy she is that LaVar is in another classroom this year. In essence, LaVar, has met his teacher's low expectations for intellectual and behavioral interactions. Shannon, on the other hand, is arrogant and noncompliant. He has tremendous potential, but he is always disrespectful. He interrupts her teaching has clear issues with authority figures. He will probably end up in prison because he can not follow the rules. She believes that Shannon's tone of voice is "too loud." He walks funny and his clothes are always loosely fitting him. Miss Cooper believes that Shannon is probably dealing drugs.	Miss Cooper would provide advance organizers to assist the students in making important connections. She would locate ways to connect Shakelia's comments about checking on individuals in jail to the check and balance concept. Miss Cooper could provide Shakelia with a visual aid to reduce her distraction by extraneous details. She might teach her to write out her responses before a presentation and to practice with a peer prior to presenting her work to the entire class. Miss Cooper would eagerly and enthusiastically provide LaVar with the wait time that he needs to respond appropriately. She would praise him for using a judge with whom he is familiar to begin his journey toward understanding the concept to be learned. Miss Cooper would be excited in probing Shannon about the "UniverSoul" Circus. She would acknowledge her unfamiliarity with this circus and encourage Shannon to share his experiences with the class. Finally, she would ask Shannon to give reasons that he believes the branches of government do not work. She would engage in active listening, and again, probe the student if she needs further clarification on his dynamic analogy.

can, middle-class youth. The implications of these studies posited that the behavior and function of African American youth may only be understood in relation to a European American contrast group and perspective. Yet, as Jones (1989) noted, "Only principles, that have been discovered through direct research on the African American, will lead to an understanding of the behavior of the African American" (p. xv). Specifically, the achievement challenges of African American youth demand empirical examinations that result in treatment models that respond to and impact educational, ecological, and personal environmental frameworks in which these youth interact (Asante, 1991; Du Bois, 1903; Obiakor, 1992; Woodson, 1933). Nonetheless, despite contentions that African American youth would benefit educationally when research results in relevant and responsive instruction, little is known about what this kind of instruction entails and who is better prepared to deliver it. In fact, little research has systematically included this contextual focus on African American learners (see e.g., Artiles, 1998; Ewing, 2001; Meyer & Patton, 2001; Patton, 1998). Traditional research in "best practice" in general and special education has seldom included direct research on African American learners. Hence, a disconnect between the cultural ethos and the delivery of educational services has yielded incomplete school outcomes among African American learners, especially those receiving services in special education.

INSIDER AGITATION AND RESEARCH ON CULTURE AND DISPROPORTIONALITY

Set against the racial turbulence of the civil rights era, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was arrested during a demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. Following his arrest, he learned that on the outside, his fellow clergy were publicly criticizing his efforts of nonviolent civil unrest to demand freedom and justice for all citizens of Birmingham. In response, King penned "Letter from Birmingham Jail," a poignant lamentation to his fellow clergyman of why direct action from the insiders was critical to the movement:

> Like so many experiences of the past we were comforted with blasted hopes, and the dark shadow of a deep disappointment settled upon us. We had no alternative except that of preparing for direct action. Never again can we afford to live in a narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea.

Scheurich and Young (1997) contended that traditional research epistemologies may be racially biased; this may clearly be the case in the research-to-practice enterprise in the field of special education (Artiles & Trent, 1997; Bos & Fletcher, 1997; McCray & Garcia, 2002; Patton, 1998; Pugach, 2001). Indeed, these scholars' collective works suggest a need to rethink research paradigms in the area of multicultural special education and research on individuals from diverse racial, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Little of what we know about effectively teaching and managing students with disabilities can be readily transferable to diverse students with disabilities. Teachers continue to complain that they do not know how to teach their culturally and linguistically diverse students, particularly African American males.

Thus, Pugach (2001) has suggested new directions in research methodology; Bos and Fletcher (1998) have indicated a need for systematic investigation of sociocultural variables related to identifying best teaching practices for diverse learners with disabilities; Patton (1998) has called for "new script writers" to address African American disproportionate representation in special education. As Dr. King suggested, direct action, or inside agitation, leads to change. Thus, in the spirit of Dr. King, we call attention to the scholarship of theorists, researchers, and practitioners who have examined the potential, reality, and ultimate reversal of decades of disproportionate trends of African American representation in special education programs. We were particularly interested in the work that redefines special education epistemologies, ontologies, and axiologies, especially related to practices in referral and placement; assessment; personnel recruitment, retention, and preparation; and curriculum and instruction (Patton, 1998).

We conducted a preliminary search of databases such as ERIC, Social Sciences Index, Academic Periodicals Index, World Cat, Lexis-Nexis, and Dissertation Abstracts International to search for literature produced during the last decade. The results of our search yielded 24 studies published between 1990 and 2001 that have implications for the disproportion issue as we have discussed in this chapter. Briefly, researchers have examined assessment issues (Cozart, 1995; Russo & Talbert-Johnson, 1997), referral and placement practices (Bos & Fletcher, 1997; Butler, 1993; Diment, 1999; Eitle, 1999; Ford & Webb, 1994; Harry & Anderson, 1994; Oswald et al., 2000; Patton, 1998; Serwatka et al., 1995; Simmons, 1993), African American personnel recruitment and retention issues (Cartledge, 1995; McCray et al., 2002), teacher education preparation for diversity (Larke, Webb-Johnson, & Rochon, 1999; Webb-Johnson, 1994), and curriculum and instruction (Hamilton, 1996; Hester, 1997; Nolly, 1997).

Unlike conventional research paradigms investigating African American student referral and special education placement, the aforementioned research focuses specifically on culturally conditioned behaviors and cultural characteristics as an integral component influencing the interactions between teachers and African American students, and teachers' subsequent responses about the special education needs of African American students. As examples, we provide a description of four such studies of the relationships between students' sociocultural characteristics and teachers' referral decisions (Glenn, 1996; Moore, 1997; Neal, 1997; Presswood, 1998). These studies are among the first to study systematically influences of culture-related behavior and astuteness on teachers' perceptions about African American students' need for special education services.

First, Moore (1997) studied 11 African American early childhood teachers to determine their decisions to refer African American students for special education programs. Using qualitative methods of data collection, including interviews, observations, and written documents, Moore reported that African American teachers described "their ideal students as female, fair, and average to very mature, and their difficult students as male, dark, African American and differently mature to very immature" (p. 272). As described in earlier studies on African Americans, teachers described their ideal students as also well groomed and articulate.

Relatedly, Glenn (1996) studied 96 teachers from 24 school districts (eight each from rural, suburban, and urban districts) to ascertain characteristics teachers believe promulgate the referral and placement of African American students in special education classrooms for students with mental retardation and emotional disturbance. After reading a vignette and viewing students' photographs, the teachers were asked to complete a survey. Glenn found that the degree of students' skin color gradation influences teachers' decisions to refer African American students to special education. In fact, according to Glenn, not only does the degree of skin color gradation influence teachers' decisions to refer, but also significant differences were apparent when skin color is combined with relationship characteristics indicative of African American culture. The greatest percentage of teachers selected the vignette with the dark-skinned picture for a definite referral, with teachers having less than 10 years of teaching experience selecting this vignette more frequently than teachers with 10 years or more teaching experience.

In an interesting investigation of culturally bound movement styles (i.e., walking), Neal (1997) examined the effects of African American adolescent males' movement styles on teachers' expectations. Neal surveyed 136 middle school teachers from a suburban school district regarding their perceptions of student intelligence, aggression, and need for special education based upon traditional walking style versus the "cool pose" often associated with many African American males' strolling patterns. Neal found that (a) teachers perceived African American and European American students with a stroll lower in achievement than African American and European American students with standard movement styles; (b) teachers rated European American students with a stroll lower in achievement than African American students with a stroll; (c) teachers perceived African American and European American students with a stroll higher in aggression than African American and European American students with standard movement styles; and (d) teachers perceived African American and

European American students with a stroll as more likely to need special education services than African American and European American students with a standard walk.

In another study of African American cultural behavioral styles and teacher referral practices, Presswood (1998) investigated the influence of African American males' behavioral styles on teachers' referrals to classes for students with emotional disturbance. Using a sample of 273 general education teachers ranging from pre-K through grade 8, Presswood had the teachers review case studies and complete a survey. Based upon his analysis, he found: (a) African American teachers reported referring slightly higher numbers of both African American and European American students than European American teachers; (b) both European American and African American teachers referred more European American males to classes for students with emotional disturbance, which contradicted actual teacher and placement practices in the school district; and (c) European American teachers perceived African American male students as more aggressive than European American students even when European American students had identical information and displayed African American behavioral style and/or patterns.

These and other investigations indicate that, indeed, researchers are beginning to examine African American disproportionate representation in special education from perspectives of culture-bound behaviors, studying closely teacher effects and teacher perceptions of African American students' need for special education services. As Oswald and colleagues (1999) noted, it is important to extend the research agenda to include factors other than race, SES, and gender in determining influences on the problem of African American disproportionality in special education. Although researchers and policymakers often rely on numerical calculations to inform, legislation, funding, and special education service delivery models, as many scholars know well, qualitatively different curricula, learning experiences, and teacher–student interactions, ensue disproportional representation of students of color, especially among African American learners. Consider, for example, Diment's (1999) conclusion that African American students' overrepresentation in SED (serious emotional disturbance) programs cannot be attributed to their demonstrating higher levels of maladaptive behaviors than White students. In fact, the Civil Rights Project (2000) found that higher rates of suspension for African Americans were not supported by evidence in referral records of more severe behavioral infractions than other groups. Empirical evidence sheds light further on the link between teachers' misunderstandings and misinterpretations of students' culturally determined behaviors and subsequent decisions to refer those students for special education programs. Moreover, as Presswood (1998) and Oswald and colleagues noted, patterns of referral across schools, communities, and classroom teachers are qualitatively different, further illuminating the complexity of the disproportionate representation in special education programs for students with disabilities and gifts and talents. The Office of Civil Rights (1997) has indicated that the significant disproportionality of African American males in SED programs, for example, warrants the need to study how behavior is perceived and interpreted.

CONCLUSION

The problem of disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education persists, despite nearly 20 years of research and debate. African American students continue to be placed at disproportionate rates in programs for students with mental retardation and emotional disturbances. Evidence is accruing that African Americans are also demonstrating patterns for being overrepresented in other disability categories, including autism and developmental delay. In this chapter, we examined disproportionality and described the state of African American representation across 13 disability categories protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997). We also discussed prevailing theories that have perpetuated the identification of African Americans as disadvantaged, deficient, and different, thus impacting their disproportionate placement in special education. Finally, we have suggested that current best practices in the field of special education do not satisfactorily meet the academic and social needs of many African American students, resulting in their continued low achievement and failure to benefit from instruction either in general education or special education classrooms. We have further suggested that a shift in research paradigms and epistemologies is required to inform appropriate and culturally responsive pedagogy and teaching practices for African Americans placed at risk for identification and placement in programs for students with disabilities. Only through the continuous development of new research questions can we ensure that assessment, identification, and placement decisions are accurate and fair. Our collective efforts as researchers and teacher educators will also benefit from critical examination in the area of curriculum and instruction decisions that are culturally responsive to assist in reversing the trend of disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education.

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CHAPTER 20

THE DROPOUT RATE AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

A Policy Perspective

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INTRODUCTION

Educational attainment is a major determinant of one's later life chances and status. Research has consistently found that better educated individuals earn more, are healthier, and more active (Levin 1972; McDill, Natriello, & Pallas 1987; Peng, 1983; Rumberger, 1987). Regardless, every year a significant proportion of American youth fail to complete high school and thus place great stress on themselves, their families, and on society. Among those students who drop out, ethnic-racial minorities have the highest rates. For example, in 1999 the dropout rate for non-Hispanic Whites ages 16 to 24 was 7%, 13% for non-Hispanic Blacks, and 29% for Hispanics.[1] For

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Surmounting All Odds, pages 487–522
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males, the figures are 8%, 12%, and 31%, respectively.[2] For a vast proportion of this group, being a school dropout has ensured a life of economic and social hardships.

For African American males, being a school dropout can be especially debilitating. For example, over a third of African American male high school dropouts age 20 to 35 were in prison or jail on an average day in the late 1990s (Western & Pettit 2000). Research also indicates that employment is affected by education. Indeed, researchers note that White male dropouts hold on average about 9.8 jobs during their careers; in contrast, African American male dropouts hold about 8.0 jobs during their careers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000). Also, while there has been some leveling in the earnings gap between African American and White dropouts, African American dropouts still earn less than White dropouts. In 1984, the African American-to-White male dropout ratio was .75 and in 1995 it was .91. In other words, in 1984, African American male dropouts earned about 75% of what White male dropouts earned; by 1995, earnings were 91% of what Whites earned (Lerman, 1997). It would appear that being a dropout for African American males holds drastic economic, social, and health consequences.

The dropout rate among African American males should not only motivate us to develop explanations as to why these rates are so high, but they should also drive our search for effective dropout prevention/intervention strategies. The essence of our work in this chapter is to undertake such a task. In pursuing this goal, we have set three separate objectives for ourselves. First, we examine the breadth and scope of the dropout problem among African American males, comparing their rates to Whites and Hispanics. Second, we use an at-risk framework in reviewing an extensive body of literature about why youth drop out. Such a review is a necessary step toward developing sound theoretical explanations and then solid dropout prevention/intervention programs. Finally, we provide some practical advice about how educational decision makers should go about developing dropout prevention/intervention program(s).

BREADTH AND SCOPE OF THE DROPOUT RATE AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

Defining School Dropouts

There are at least two reasons why it is difficult to examine and interpret dropout rates. To begin with, there are important data problems: inconsistency in the quality of data and what it means to be a school dropout (Kaufman, 2001; Pallas, 1984, 1985).[3] Second, there are currently three fundamental ways of computing dropout rates (Event, Status, and Cohort), and differences among the three are significant so researchers need to be clear which rate is being used. In this section we briefly discuss and define these three dropout measures.

Event dropout rates. These rates refer to the proportion of students who leave school each year without completing high school. For example, say at the beginning of the school year in 1998, there were 40 million students starting the school year in grades 6 thru 12. At the end of the school year in 1999, 4 million students left school and did not return in the fall of 1999. The Event dropout rate, then, is 10%: 4 million ÷ 40 million.

Status dropout rates. Dropout rates computed by using the Status concept refer to persons (typically young adults) within a given age range (such as 14 to 25) who, for any given year, are not attending school and have not completed high school. The *Status* dropout rate tends to be higher than the *Event* dropout rate because the *Status* rate does not take into account the last year a person attended school, and it also tends to use larger age intervals. For all intents and purposes, the *Status* dropout rate is a cumulative measure.

For example, say that in 1999 there were 75 million persons ages 16 to 25 in the United States. Of this 75 million, 10 million indicate that they had not completed high school and were not in school. So the *Status* dropout rate is 13.3%: 10 million ÷ 75 million.

Cohort dropout rates. These dropout rates track the experiences of a cohort (a group of students sharing some trait, such as age and grade) over time. Thus, at some hypothetical beginning point in time, $P_{t,}$ a cohort of students are followed over time and students who drop out are summed and used as the numerator. The denominator are students who comprise the group of students (cohort) who began the study at time P_t . At another point in time, some additional students drop out and they are added to the numerator. How researchers handle the denominator is the cause of some concern. For example, data from the National Center for Education Statistics website (Table 10 in www.nces.gov/pubsold/r94/r9410t10.html) indicates that after members of the cohort drop out, they are no longer in the denominator. We do not feel this is how such measures should be computed. We see the cohort as an inclusive unit and its experiences should be tracked over time.

Data on the *Cohort* dropout rate are not used in our analysis. We have two reasons for our decision. First, such rates differ greatly from the *Event* and *Status* dropout rates and are not comparable. Second, because such rates are limited to a specific cohort, they cannot be generalized to other groups.

Analysis

In this chapter we examine dropout rates among African American males and compare their rates to White and Hispanic males. There are two other methodological criteria we introduce in our discussion. First, wherever possible we examine data over time, in some cases from 1990 to 1999, in other cases from 1990 to 1998. Second, two dropout rate data are examined: *Status* and *Event*.

Dropouts Rates by Race and Hispanic Ethnicity

Table 20.1 presents data on *Status* dropouts by race and Hispanic ethnicity for the years 1990 to 1999. Hispanics have the highest dropout rates. Indeed, over the entire period nearly one in three Hispanics ages 16 to 24 are high school dropouts. These rates are about three times greater than the White rate and twice that of the African American rate.

Table 20.1. Status Dropouts among Males Ages 16 to 24 By Race and Hispanic Ethnicity, 1990–1999

Year	*All*	*White*	*Black*	*Hispanic*
1999	11.9	7.7	12.1	31.0
1998	13.3	8.6	15.5	33.5
1997	11.9	8.5	13.3	27.0
1996	11.4	7.3	13.5	30.3
1995	12.2	9.0	11.1	30.0
1994	12.3	8.0	14.1	31.6
1993	11.2	8.2	12.6	28.1
1992	11.3	8.0	12.5	32.1
1991	13.0	8.9	13.5	39.2
1990	12.3	9.3	11.9	34.3
%Change: 90–99	–3.25	–17.2	1.6	–9.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Surveys. Contact: Education and Social Stratification Branch, 301-457-2464.

The *Status* dropout rate declined between 1990 and 1999. Among White males ages 16 to 24, the *Status* dropout rate declined by 17%, and nearly 10% among Hispanic males of the same age. In contrast, the *Status* dropout rate among African American males increased by nearly 2% over the same time period.

Table 20.2 presents data on the *Event* dropout rate among males by race and Hispanic ethnicity for the years 1990 to 1998. Over the entire time interval represented in Table 20.2, Hispanics exhibit the highest dropout rates among the three groups. The one exception occurred in 1993 when the African American male dropout rate reached nearly 6%. Also, while the rate declined among Hispanics (1.1%), it increased significantly among Whites (7.3%) and among African Americans (12.2%).

Table 20.2. Event Dropouts among Males By Race and Hispanic Ethnicity, 1990–1998

Year	*White*	*Black*	*Hispanic*
1998	4.4	4.6	8.6
1997	4.9	4.1	10.4
1996	4.8	4.6	9.2
1995	5.4	7.9	10.9
1994	4.6	6.5	8.4
1993	4.1	5.8	5.1
1992	3.8	3.3	5.8
1991	3.6	5.5	10.4
1990	4.1	4.1	8.7
%Change, 90–99	7.3	12.2	–1.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Surveys. Contact: Education and Social Stratification Branch, 301-457-2464.

Table 20.3 presents *Status* dropout data by race and Hispanic ethnicity by urbanicity among males ages 15 to 26 for the year 1998. These data indicate that while the dropout rate is significant in the inner city for all three groups, the rates are even higher in rural areas. Indeed, among all three groups, the dropout rates among males ages 15 to 26 in rural areas are 8%, 15%, and 34% among Whites, African Americans, and Hispanics, respectively.

Table 20.3. Status Dropouts among Males Ages 16 to 25 By Urbanicity and By Race and Hispanic Ethnicity, 1998

Urbanicity	*White*	*Black*	*Hispanic*
City	5.7	13.3	32.2
Suburbs	7.1	7.6	28.7
Rural	8.1	15.1	34.1

Source: Special tabulations computed by Richard R. Verdugo from the October 1999 Current Population Surveys.

Finally, we examine dropout rates by family income. Table 20.4 presents data on the *Status* dropout rate by family income. We divided family income into quintiles. There are several important messages to be found in Table 20.4. First, Hispanics continue to have the highest dropout rates among the three groups. Second, note the very rapid decline in the dropout rate as we move up the family income scale. That is, among all three groups the bulk of those dropping out are among individuals from the lower end of the income quintiles. Moreover, Black males in the upper income quintiles dropped out at a lower rate than White males.

Table 20.4. Status Dropouts among Males Ages 16 to 25 By Family Income and By Race and Hispanic Ethnicity, 1998

Family Income	*White*	*Black*	*Hispanic*
Bottom 5th	12.2	29.7	39.5
4/5th	13.3	15.8	36.6
3/5th	11.1	8.1	33.9
2/5th	5.5	5.4	22.9
Top 5th	3.5	2.7	15.3

Source: Special tabulations computed by Richard R. Verdugo from the October 1999 Current Population Surveys.

These data indicate that the dropout rate among Black males is a serious problem. Why Black males drop out and how we may address this significant social problem is the topic of the next two sections of our chapter.

RISK FACTORS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A Risk Factor Model

In our estimation, the best way to evaluate the research on school dropouts is through a taxonomy that research suggests place youth at risk of dropping out. The taxonomy we propose as a framework includes the following six categories:

- Individual
- Family
- Peers
- School
- Community
- Societal

Individual Risk Factors

Research on factors that place students at risk places a considerable amount of emphasis on individual factors and less emphasis on structural concerns (Mehan, 2000). In this section we examine the extant research about individual factors. Our review has uncovered the following important themes: student attitudes, student skills, and student behavioral issues.

Student attitudes. Students who are at risk of dropping out tend to exhibit either low commitment to conventional goals and objectives or eschew them altogether (Gottfredson, 1982; Lawrence, 1998; Mensch & Kandel, 1988; Rumberger, 1983). Some of these attitudes include not wanting to do well in school or a general disdain of academic achievement. A corollary with such attitudes is the presence of low educational expectations (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; Kim, 1985; Newman, Wehlage, & Lamborn, 1992; Pirog & Magee, 1997; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Swanson & Schneider, 1999; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Students who are at risk of dropping out generally do not expect to do well in school, but do not care to either.

A third individual trait linked to student attitudes is low psychological well-being. Students who have psychological problems and/or low self-esteem are at greater risk of dropping out (Gottfredson, 1982).

Student skills. A significant predictor of dropping out is poor academic performance. Research has consistently pointed out that students who do not perform well in school are at risk for dropping out (Alexander, Natriello, & Pallas, 1985; Bachman, Green, & Wirtanen, 1971; Barro & Kolstad, 1987; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Combs & Cooley, 1968; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Howell & Frase, 1982b; Pallas, 1984; Peng & Takai, 1983; Ruby & Law, 1983; Sewell, Palmo, & Manni, 1981). We should point out that academic performance is itself an endogenous variable, and is explained by a number of exogenous and intervening items in the educational attainment process, for example, family SES and educational motivation.

A related concept to academic success is academic consistency. Scholars have point out that poor academic experiences early in a student's career sets the tone for their overall experiences. Later in a student's career poor early academic performance becomes a factor in leaving school (Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997; Barrington & Hendricks, 1989; Cairns, Cairns, & Neckerman, 1989; Ensminger & Slusacick, 1992; Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs, 1997; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Morris, Ehren, & Lenz, 1991; Roderick, 1993; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

Immigrant status and language skills are related to dropping out. Not only do immigrant status and language skills interact in their effect on dropping out, but language skills have an effect net of immigrant status.

For example, a considerable body of research finds that immigrant status and poor language skills interact to increase the likelihood of dropping out (Fernandez, Paulsen, & Hirano-Nakanishi, 1989; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Rumberger, 1983, 1995; Steinberg, Blinde, & Chan, 1984; Velez, 1989). While these findings are on firm ground, research also points out that some immigrants perform well academically (Suarez-Orozco, 1987).

Net of immigrant status, there is debate about the role language skills play in the dropout equation. While some scholars have argued that language is a factor in the dropout rates, Krashen (2000) argues that it is not. Instead, Krashen argues that dropping out is related to other factors, such as familial socioeconomic status.

A final skill that research has found to be related to dropping out is poor study habits. Youth who have poor study habits perform poorly in school and are thus more likely to drop out (Bachman et al., 1971; Pallas, 1984).

Student behavioral issues. A final individual-centered set of issues that research has found to be related to dropping out concern student behavior. Among those behavioral issues identified by research are low integration into school and its culture, involvement in adult roles, delinquent behavior, and student mobility.

Low commitment to school and its culture is related to dropping out. Research suggests that low interest and participation in extracurricular activities are factors related to dropping out (Finn, 1989; Hoffer, 1986; McNeal, 1995; Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1988). Other integration issues include such things as a lack of psychic attachment to school, and the lack of participation in school activities (Finn, 1989; McNeal, 1995; Newman et al., 1992; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975, 1987; Wehlage et al., 1988). The crucial point here seems to be that students who do not see school as an important mechanism in their lives and derive little, if any, positive self-esteem from pursuing or achieving schools goals and objectives are more likely to drop out.

Truancies and absences from school are other kinds of disengagement behavior. Indeed, the greater the truancies and/or absences from school, the greater the likelihood of dropping out (Bachman et al., 1971; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Fine, 1986; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

Grade retention affects the likelihood of dropping out. Being held back increases the odds of dropping out (Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Grisson & Shepard, 1989; Jimerson, 1999; Kaufman & Bradby, 1992; Roderick, 1994; Roderick, Nagaoka, Bacon, & Easton 2000; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998). However, there are some who point out that being held back increases student achievement (Alexander, Entwisle, & Dauber, 1994). The central point driving these findings concerns the reasons behind the retention decision. If a child is being held back for reasons of maturation and he or she does not have a history of poor academic performance, then retention is probably a good decision. If the decision is based on a history of academic and other behavioral issues, then retention may enhance the dropout decision.

Student involvement in adult roles has mixed effects on academic performance, including dropping out. Research indicates that marriage, having a child, and working long hours increases the likelihood of dropping out (Barro & Kolstad, 1987; Bickel & Milton, 1983; D'Amico, 1984; Howell & Frese, 1982a, 1982b; McNeal, 1995; Mott & Marsiglio, 1985; Pallas, 1984, 1987; Papagiannis, Bickel, & Fuller, 1983; Quay & Allen, 1982; Rumberger, 1983). Some scholars actually find that employment increases academic performance, school commitment, and self-esteem (Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986; Lewin-Epstein, 1981). Recent work by McNeal (1997a) provides an explanation for these contradictory findings: the negative effects of employment depend on the job and hours worked.

Student delinquent behavior is a significant predictor of dropping out. For instance, research suggests that drug use is linked to dropping out (Mensch & Kandel, 1988). Other kinds of delinquent behavior include aggressive and violent behavior, as well as activities that can only be seen as delinquent are linked to dropping out, such as vandalism, theft, and so on (Cairns et al., 1989; Lawrence, 1998; Thornberry, Moore, & Christenson, 1985).

Youth who frequently move from one school to another are at risk. Regardless of the reasons, constant movement increases the likelihood of dropping out (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Haveman, Wolfe, & Spaulding, 1991; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Swanson & Schneider, 1999; Teachman, Paasch, & Carver, 1996). Students who move a great deal face two problems that affect their school experiences. First, they fail to arrive at an understanding of school and its culture, and do not have the time to bond or connect with a school, a factor of great importance in predicting academic performance. Second, constant movement means that students fail to form important relationships with peers. Friends are important during adolescence because they act as buffers in school and during the transitions from elementary to middle school, and from middle school to high school. Constant movement makes it difficult for students to acquire both of these protective factors.

Family Risk Factors

Families play an important role in the academic performance of their children, including dropping out. A review of the relevant literature reveals that three primary issues arise when discussing the role of families and the risk of dropping out of school: family relations, family economics, and family educational support.

Family relations. Family relations cover a wide matrix of behaviors within the family unit, from communication with children to domestic violence. Unstable family relationships tend to exert negative effects on children remaining in school. Research has indicated that divorce, separation, or domestic violence place children at risk (Fine, 1986; Fitzpatrick & Yoels, 1992; Mare, 1980; Rumberger, 1983). In addition, other kinds of behavior that reflect unstable family relationships place students at risk, such as not enough parental time with children (Leibowitz, 1977), low parental influence on children pursuing conventional goals and objectives (Wright & Wright, 1976), low or poor communication between parents and their children (Alpert & Dunham, 1986; Bachman et al., 1971; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulos, Ritter, & Dornbusch, 1990), harsh behavior of parents toward their children (Bachman et al., 1971), and single-parent households (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; McNeal, 1999; Rumberger, 1983, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Teachman et al., 1996). Indeed, research indicates that strong relationships between parents and their children reduces the likelihood of dropping out (Baumrind, 1991; Dornbusch et al., 1987; McNeal, 1999; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992; Teachman et al., 1996).

There are at least two reasons why family relationships are important in the dropout decision. First, there is the issue of role models and socialization. Families are the first contact young people have with a socializing agent, and the family has a significant impact on the attitudes, values, and behavior of youth. Second, dysfunctions in the family affect student well-being. Divorce, separation, or domestic violence can reduce student well-being, including self-esteem.

Family economics. The economic status of one's parents has an important effect on the likelihood of dropping out. Research shows that low parental socioeconomic status is related to dropping out (Barrington & Hendricks, 1989; Bryk & Thum, 1989; Cairns et al., 1989; Coleman, 1988; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Hill, 1980; Howell & Frese, 1982b; Lloyd, 1978; McNeal, 1999; Pallas, 1984; Pong & Ju, 2000; Rumberger, 1983, 1995; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Stroup & Robins, 1972). A clearly allied topic is underclass status; being a member of the underclass increases the likelihood of dropping out (Ricketts & Sawhill, 1988).

Economics is linked to the presence of education-related resources and materials available to families. Research indicates that the lack of study materials and other literary materials in the home is associated with dropping out (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Rumberger, 1983). A related topic is family mobility. That is, the number of moves a family makes during a child's school career is related to dropping out. Research indicates that the greater the number of moves, the greater the risk of dropping out (Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Peng, 1983).

Finally, research has linked greater parental education, living in a two-parent household, owning a home, and living outside the central city as protective factors against dropping out (Hauser, Simmons, & Pager, 2000).

Family educational support. Parental involvement in the education of their children is crucial for their children's educational performance. By supporting their children's education, parents not only act as role models, but they can act as advocates for their children, and provide support when it becomes necessary. Yet another important function of parental involvement is symbolic; parental involvement tells children that they and their education are important. Research indicates that low parental involvement in the education of their children increases the likelihood of dropping out (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Epstein, 1990; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Lareau, 1987; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger et al., 1990; Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Suichu & Willms, 1996).

Peer Risk Factors

The influence of peers on the behavior of young people has been well documented. In terms of dropping out, two themes emerge from the research. First, research indicates that young people who associate with peers exhibiting low attachment to social institutions, such as school, and who also engage in various forms of delinquent behavior are more likely to drop out (Bachman et al., 1971; Barro & Kolstad, 1987; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Elliott & Voss, 1974; Kim, 1985).[4] It should also be pointed out that associating with delinquents also places students at risk (Lawrence, 1998).

A second peer-related risk factor that research has identified concerns dating (Combs & Cooley, 1968; Pallas, 1984). The implication is that the time spent dating and preparing to date is time that one might have been spent studying or on some other school task.

School Risk Factors

In discussions about school dropouts, schools themselves are not fail safe. There are many ways in which schools can place students at risk of dropping out or of pushing them out. In reviewing this body of work, we have organized the findings around three central concepts: school policies, school climate, and school resources.

School policies. A number of school policies place students at risk by stigmatizing, isolating, or enhancing their disengagement from school.[5] A recent school policy that researchers argue places students at risk of dropping out are educational standards. The push for greater standards tends to place marginal students at even greater risk (McDill, Natriello, & Pallas, 1985, 1986). Researchers argue that such policies raise the academic bar, so to speak, but that marginal students cannot hope to meet these higher standards when they have had trouble meeting existing standards.

Another policy that tends to place students at risk is tracking. Lower-track students are not only isolated from other students, but they are stigmatized and labeled as slow learners. This labeling and stigmatizing process tends to push low-track students away from school; they fail to see, with good reason, schools as places that enhance their self-esteem. Thus, tracking places students at risk (Gamoran, 1987; Oakes, 1985).

Finally, retention policies place students at risk. Research indicates that retained students are more likely to be truant or absent from school, and eventually drop out (Heubert & Hauser, 1999; Smith & Shepard, 1989; Stroup & Robins, 1972).

School climate. Research has identified a number of school climate factors that place students at risk of dropping out.[6] To begin with, the school academic climate has an effect. The lower the academic climate, the greater the risk of dropping out (Bryk & Thum, 1989; Hoffer, 1997; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000). McNeal (1997b), however, found that no such effect exists after controlling for student socioeconomic background and other factors, such as school social composition, school resources, and school structures (organizational structure).

Several kinds of social and physical structures affect the likelihood of dropping out. Smaller class and school size, a core curriculum of high standards[7] with opportunities for students to recover without failure or retention, teacher support such as professional development, and scheduled planning time are all factors that reduce the likelihood of dropping out (Ancess & Wichterle, 2001; Bryk & Thum, 1989; McPartland & Jordon, 2001; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000). Note, however, that Rumberger (1995) points out that these factors are highly correlated with the socioeconomic status of the studentry.

Two additional climate issues have emerged from the literature that we may view as structural: race and class composition of the studentry and Catholic versus public schools. The larger the racial composition and/or lower class composition of the student population, the greater the risk of dropping out (Bryk & Thum, 1989; McNeal, 1997b; Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000). Moreover, research indicates that Catholic schools have fewer dropouts than public schools (Bryk & Thum, 1989; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000). (Note, however, that students who leave Catholic schools have the option of attending public schools. So, the issue of dropping out is not comparable across environments.)

A final climate issue concerns the values and expectations of teachers. Research has indicated that low teacher expectations and negative comments directed at students who are already at risk tends to increase that risk (Barrington & Hendricks, 1989; see also Verdugo, 1986, for a discussion of how labeling and expectations affect minority student achievement).

Community/Societal Risk Factors

Communities and society are also implicated in placing students at risk. Within the community, certain cultural and climate factors affect the behaviors, values, and long-term prospects of young people. For example, high community crime and violence and unemployment. In terms of societal risk factors, national policies can place students at risk, for example, the school restructuring movement, national standards, and so on.

Community risk factors. A number of community economic and cultural factors place students at risk. One such factor is low prospects for socioeconomic success or upward social mobility (Rumberger, 1983, 1987; Steinberg et al., 1984). Students raised in communities where adults have poor jobs or no jobs fail to see, on a daily basis, the relationship between education and their economic life chances. They fail to see education as a factor in their later socioeconomic destination.

Related community topics are high unemployment, poverty, mobility, and crime, which tend to raise the risk of dropping out (Bickel & Papagiannis, 1988; Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993; Clark, 1992; Crane, 1991; Hallinan & Williams, 1990; Wilson, 1987). Students in such environments not only question their economic prospects but they face serious obstacles in the path of their education: their safety and the reality of an unequal educational opportunity.

Societal risk factors. Society is also implicated in the dropout rate. Low tax revenues for government assisted programs tend to be linked to increasing the risk of dropping out (Catterall, 1985; Levin, 1972; Rumberger, 1987; Steinberg et al., 1984). In addition, low national income (recessions or depressions), which reduces job prospects and lowers political and social participation, is also linked to dropping out (Catterall, 1985; Levin, 1972).

CULTURAL AND STRUCTURAL THEORIES OF DROPPING OUT

Two paradigms dominate the theoretical discussions about the academic performance of African American male students: cultural and structural paradigms. Cultural theorists argue that the root cause of poor educational achievement among African American youth can be found in their culture: the values, views, and norms found in the family and community, and in youth themselves. Structural theorists, in contrast, argue that the patterned, regular, and predictable behavior (and attitudes) of society and its institutions are the main causes.

By a paradigm we mean a view or perspective that is used to assess, theorize, or evaluate a problem. In economics, a major paradigm is human capital and its equivalent in sociology is status attainment theory. In his classic discussion about normal science, Thomas Kuhn (1970) defines a paradigm as a perspective that is used:

> to define the legitimate problems and methods of a research field for succeeding generations of practitioners. They were able to do so because they shared two essential characteristics. Their achievement was sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group away from competing modes of scientific activity. Simultaneously, it was sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve. (p. 10)

In this section we review the main themes from each paradigm and later hope to use our discussion in shaping a set of recommendations for developing sound dropout prevention/intervention strategies.

Cultural Paradigms

Culture defined. As used in our chapter, culture is a system of shared beliefs and behaviors. Four main components that reinforce and stabilize culture are symbols, language, values, and norms. Symbols are objects to which members in a culture give meaning. For example, dress and appearance and objects that hold high status or have religious implications are forms of symbols. Language is a cultural component, and is probably a culture's most important symbol. Language is a mechanism by which individuals communicate and confer status, prestige, and power to one another.

Values are a culture's central beliefs about good and bad, acceptable and unacceptable, and what is and is not desirable. Finally, there are culture's norms; the agreed-upon prescriptions about social behavior. There are two kinds of norms, mores and folkways. Mores are behaviors that deal with moral standards, for example, cheating and stealing. In addition, there are a culture's folkways, which are less formal, but still carry a considerable amount of social weight, for example, wearing or not wearing a tie to the opera.

Culture, then, is a system of beliefs and behaviors that allow one to function in a social system in a patterned, regular, and predictable manner.

The main cultural theme: Oppositional culture. Given our definition of culture, what do extant cultural theories say about African American males and their educational attainment, including dropping out? The most prominent hypothesis from this paradigm concerns the *oppositional stances* taken by African American male students toward schools and the behavioral and attitudinal expectations in that institution. By oppositional culture, we mean that the views, beliefs, and behaviors of African American youth are counter to those of mainstream society. It should be noted, however, that cultural theorists acknowledge that the primary cause of such cultural responses are the perceived and real structural barriers youth see in the larger society (Anderson, 1994; Ogbu, 1978).

A number of social scientists have argued that African American youth, especially those in the inner city, are the primary cause of their own academic failures because of the oppositional stances they take to education and school (Anderson, 1994, 2000; Fordham, 1996; McWhorter, 2000; Ogbu, 1989, 1990). At the core of oppositional culture is the "code of the street." Anderson (1994) has this to say:

> called a code of the streets, which amounts to a set of informal rules governing interpersonal public behavior, including violence. The rules prescribe both a proper comportment and a proper way to respond if challenged. They regulate the use of violence and so allow those who are inclined to aggression to precipitate violent encounters in an approved way. The rules have been established and are enforced mainly by the street-oriented, but on the streets the distinction between street and decent is often irrelevant, everybody knows that if the rules are violated, there are penalties. Knowledge of the code is thus largely defensive; it is literally necessary for operating in public. (p. 82)

The key concept for the code is the need for respect. Within oppositional culture, respect is not easily attained and a tremendous amount of energy and effort is spent maintaining one's respect. A set of rules and regulations about how one obtains and maintains respect are part of the code. To attain and maintain respect, one's entire demeanor and presentation of self focus on the "potential for violence." Clothing, speech, and movement are all part of the package. A person who has respect is not "bothered" and even the most minor slight can lead to serious physical confrontations.

Getting and maintaining respect is also part of one's identity, and a central issue to scholars adhering to the cultural paradigm. For African American males, identity is based on the cultural depiction of "*manhood*." The concept of *manhood* means that youth take the prerogatives of men with respect to other men, women, and strangers. *Manhood* means that one has a sense of physicality and presents oneself as ruthless. To be a man, one knows the code of the street, and if one is not a real man he is diminished as a person and does not deserve things that are valued in his very narrow social system. There is, then, a certain meritocracy to the code of the street; everyone has the opportunity to know and understand the code and follow its prescriptions. Everyone is also held accountable for knowing the code; if one does not know the code and becomes a victim, well then too bad, it's their fault.

The process of getting respect is central to the concept of *manhood.* In gaining respect, one must exhibit nerve. One exhibits nerve by taking someone else's possessions (the greater the value, the greater the nerve), "messing" with someone else's woman, throwing the first punch, getting in someone else's face, or pulling a trigger. Such public displays of nerve are symbolic—that an individual has nerve and will take drastic measures to get and maintain respect and thus his *manhood.* The flip side is, of course, that the display of "nerve" can lead to life-threatening situations.

The proper display of "nerve" also sends another public message: that one is not afraid to die. Among hard-core street youth, dying to get and maintain respect is perfectly acceptable. As Anderson (1994) points out:

> Not to be afraid to die is by implication to have few compunctions about taking another's life. Not to be afraid to die is the quid pro quo of being able to take somebody else's life—for the right reasons, if the situation demands it. When others believe this is one's position, it gives one a real sense of power on the streets. Such credibility is what many inner-city youths strive to achieve, whether they are decent or street-oriented, both because of its practical defensive value and because of the positive way it makes them feel about themselves. (p. 92)

The implications that oppositional culture have for education are varied, but they can be summarized by noting that youth embroiled in such a system reject or do not value educational values, beliefs, and behavior. The most often-cited examples of the oppositional culture, in terms of education, are the concepts "selling out," and "acting White." Thus, some students reject the value of academic performance and other mainstream values that stress achievement and attachment to mainstream institutions.

Structural Paradigms

Structure defined. In their arguments structuralists are referring to social structure. By social structure is meant the patterned, regular, and expected modes of behavior and social interaction. Also included are social institutions and their ways of operation. Institutional patterns of operation are either historically established and/or prescribed in charters or policies.

Structural themes. Some scholars have defined structure in terms of political economy (Massey & Denton, 1993; Noguera, 2001; Tabb, 1970; Wilson, 1978, 1987), that is, the operation of social institutions affects educational opportunity, for example, the labor market, the educational system. Their argument is that the "practices" and policies in such institutions deny or create barriers for upward mobility, and that these obstacles are the main cause of academic failure or low academic performance among African American students.

The driving concept of the structuralist paradigm is *isolation.* Schools are places for the instruction of the values and norms one needs for citizenship in a social system, that is, how to follow and obey rules and regulations (Apple, 1982; Bowles & Gintis, 1973; Loewen, 1995; Spring, 1994). Through its practices and policies, schools tend to isolate or separate African American students from other students, either mentally or physically. Both practices are important because there is a distinctive link between school climate and school structure (Brookover & Erickson, 1969; Epstein & MacIver, 1992; Irvine, 1990; Lee & Bryk, 1988; Morrow & Torres, 1995), and both are tied to student performance. Moreover, research indicates that access to experiences and/or activities that are primarily academic, as well as teacher encouragement, are especially important for the academic performance of African American males (Finn & Cox, 1992; Foster, 1997; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lee, 2000; Sanders & Reed, 1995). Research also suggests that socioeconomic origins and race have direct effects on how students are treated and the set of expectations educators have about such students (Brookover & Erickson, 1969; Verdugo, 1986). Four practices are often cited as evidence: tracking, school policies, expectations, and socialization.

A considerable body of research indicates not only that African American males are tracked into lower classes (Oakes, 1985; Simmons & Grady, 1992; Wright, 1996), but that special education classes and learning-disabled students are disproportionately represented by African American males (Harry & Anderson, 1999; Milofsky, 1974). One important reason these practices exist is a result of the expectations and labels teachers' and administrators' have about African American males. From an early age African American males are treated differently (Slaughter-Defoe & Richards, 1994). Most often African American males are seen as problems, including defiant, aggressive, deficient, and intimidating (Grant, 1985; Hilliard, 1976; Hunter & Davis, 1992; Majors, Tyler, Peden, & Hall, 1994; Slaughter-Defoe & Richards, 1994). It is little wonder that African American males begin to disengage from school at an early age and that their disengagement increases as they progress through the educational system (Carter, 1999).

An important contributor to the disengagement African American male students from school are school policies. Research has shown that African American males are punished more severely and more frequently that other students (Ferguson, 2000; Harry & Anderson, 1999; Sandler, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Indeed, schools appear to be places where African American males are marginalized and subject to negative stigmatization. Schools fail to support and nurture African American males in a manner that would enhance their academic performance (Meier, England, & Stweard, 1989; Steele, 2001). It is little wonder that African American males disengage from school.

The socialization practices of schools also have been implicated in the poor educational experiences of African American males. Of particular interest is the interaction between race and gender. Schools are places where gender identities and roles are learned, practiced, and influence social interaction. For African American males, gender is important in the school context because research suggests that African American males tend to see schools as feminized environments (Thorne, 1986, 1993). The importance given to neatness, orderliness, and other kinds of practices in school are seen as feminine traits by African American males, and more importantly these traits are reinforced by a predominantly female teaching force.[8]

Schools are places in which the roles associated with race are learned. To be sure, schools are not the only place individuals learn the meaning of race and ethnicity, but for children undergoing the process of developing their identities, schools are important. Schools are important because students spend a great deal of their day in such an environment, continuously interacting with students from other races and ethnic groups, and because one function of schools is to assist in developing one's identity. Thus, schools are places where children learn about the significance of race and begin to understand its ideological dimensions (Apple, 1982; Cross, Parnham, & Helms, 1991; Dyson, 1994; Metz, 1978; Miles 1989; Peskin, 1991; Tatum, 1992; Troyna & Carrington, 1990). Students learn these dimensions through a variety of manifest and latent rituals in the school: teachers' lesson plans, the hidden curriculum, play, name-calling and the use of racial epithets, and the implementation of school policies such as suspensions, expulsions, and tracking. What African American males learn is that they are not highly valued in school and in the wider society as well.

Dropping Out: A Synthesis of Cultural and Structural Paradigms

The debate between structural and cultural theorists remains unproductive because it is clear that both are partially correct in their explanations, but incorrect in their emphasis. As a result, some scholars have attempted a synthesis of both paradigms. Such syntheses appear to focus on human agency or the ability of individuals to make decisions based on available data and information. In other words, structural opportunities and cultural views interact in the decision-making process (MacLeod, 1987; Morrow & Torres, 1995; Willis, 1977).

One attempted synthesis was undertaken by Luker (1996, cited in Noguera, 2000). Luker noticed that both lower- and middle-class girls get pregnant. For years pregnancy among girls was explained by the use of the cultural paradigm (welfare dependency or permissive sexual mores) or from a structural paradigm (inadequate access to birth control or lack of economic opportunities). Luker interpreted these findings by integrating both the structural and cultural perspectives and by pointing out that both lower- and middle-class girls engage in sex and sometimes get pregnant. However, middle-class girls are less likely to have babies because they realize it will jeopardize their future success. Lower-class girls, on the other hand, are more likely to have babies because they do not believe babies will harm their own bleak future. In fact, many lower-class girls believe having a baby will help them become responsible adults. While Luker appears to be on the right track, there are two major issues she fails to address, which we discuss later.

Both structuralists and culturalists are selective in how they criticize one another. What both camps fail to mention is the strong ties between the two. For example, cultural theorists are aware of the importance structure plays in influencing cultural responses. Indeed, Anderson (1994) says:

> The inclination to violence springs from the circumstances of life among the ghetto poor—the lack of jobs that pay a living wage, the stigma of race, the fallout from rampant drug use and drug trafficking, and the resulting alienation and lack of hope for the future.... Simply living in such an environment places young people at special risk of falling victim to aggressive behavior. (p. 81)

In addition, cultural theorists realize that structures are also perceived as open by some and not merely barriers to socioeconomic success.[9] It is this kind of deemphasized information that is the basis of our synthesis.

Our synthesis is based on two assumptions: (1) cultural reaction is both positive and negative to mainstream values, and (2) structures vary on a dimension of open to closed. Both assumptions lead us to the following table.

	Culture	
Structure	*Street*	*Mainstream*
Blocked	Oppositional (A)	Reform/Change (B)
Open	Adaptable (C)	Assimilative (D)

Cells A and B: Blocked structure and culture. The intersection of blocked opportunities and the adherence to a street culture leads to the development of an oppositional stance regarding mainstream society and its norms, values, and institutions among some segments of the African American community. When cultural theorists such as Anderson (1994) and Fordham and Ogbu (1986) discuss their theories, they are referring to situations depicted in cell A.

Structural theorists also refer to cell A. Structuralists see blocked opportunities as the prime mover in the development of oppositional culture among minority youth. The difference between both the culturalist and structuralist views is one of emphasis. Culturalists stress anti-mainstream norms and values, while structuralists stress blocked opportunities. In either case, the outcomes are the same.

In cell B the structure is blocked (real or perceived) and the culture is mainstream (values and norms are similar to the dominant culture). Under such interaction, we expect respondents to exhibit a range of behaviors and attitudes, from conformity to attitudes and behavior that seek to reform or change the system. We take this position for two reasons. First, our table is not an either/or exhibit. Rather, it represents two polar opposites in a continuum; structures are open-to-closed, and cultural views are oppositional-to-mainstream. Second, since we know that class and culture are related—working-class culture tends to stress conformity, while elite White culture stresses self-direction (Kohn, 1969)—we expect this kind of variability in cell B. Indeed, not only does Anderson (1994) indicate that "decent" families live in the community, but research by O'Connor (1997) implies that working-class African American families understand the concept of "struggle" in their dealings with institutions and their agents. O'Connor finds that inner-city students who struggle are more resilient and are more likely to achieve academically than their peers. By struggle is meant the ability to confront agents and institutions when an individual's rights have been obstructed or violated. Only a small portion of the dropout population has its origins in this group.

Cells C and D: Open structure and culture. In cells C and D, while the structure is open or perceived to be open, the cultural response may be driven by a street or mainstream worldview. When street culture interacts with a perceived open structure, we expect respondents to be adaptable. In such occasions, respondents might be able to "switch" between contexts. They act street in their community, but mainstream in such institutions as the school. Indeed, Anderson (1994) offers a prime example of this: "The difference between the decent and the street-oriented youth is often that the decent youth makes a conscious decision to appear tough and manly; in another setting—with teachers, say, or at his part-time job—he can be polite and deferential" (p. 92). A small proportion of the dropout population can trace its origins to this group.

In contrast to cell C, those in cell D tend to be assimilationist oriented. They adhere to mainstream cultural values and norms, and see structure as open. Consequently, their behavior is not oppositional and meshes with societal institutions. In the inner city, this group is primarily composed of the working class or working poor. We expect little, if any, of the school dropout population to have its origins in this group.

A cross-classification, with an implied continuum of concepts, of the structural and cultural paradigms has two major assets. First, it shows that both paradigms can be used in enhancing our understanding of the dropout problem. Second, such a cross-classification can potentially better flesh out the policy and theoretical possibilities from each paradigm. Structures are not only barriers or closed, they are open and starting points for socioeconomic success. Not all disadvantaged groups develop "oppositional" cultures, most in fact are quite mainstream in their values and norms (Anderson, 1994). Thus, in beginning the process of developing and implementing effective dropout programs, both issues of structure and culture must drive the process.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF DROPOUTS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES: PROGRAMS THAT WORK

Risk Factors and Paradigms: A Synthesis

Our review of two broad bodies of research suggests that both can be merged in an effort at building sound dropout policies. The two bodies of research we have reviewed concern risk factors associated with dropping out, and the two main theoretical paradigms regarding dropping out among African American males. Both bodies of research can be merged.

Table 20.5 presents our view of how both bodies of research are related. As can be seen, we view individual risk factors as solely cultural since they address skills, attitudes, and behavior. School decision makers can work to build these factors so students can become engaged in the school process and reduce the risk of dropping out.

Table 20.5. Risk Factors and Theoretical Paradigms: A Synthesis

	Theoretical Paradigms	
Risk Factors	*Structural*	*Cultural*
Individual		✓
Family	✓	✓
Peers	✓	✓
School	✓	
Community	✓	
Society	✓	

Family and peer risk factors are both structural and cultural. Low family SES and factors related to work can be addressed by structural policies such as greater effort by schools to involve parents in the education of their children; schools need to be "parent-centered" in addition to being child-centered. Family cultural issues such as domestic violence, poor family relations, and so on, can be addressed by schools providing access to counseling or social welfare services. Peer relations are also structural and cultural because youth involved in delinquent behavior lack the attachment to school and/or adults that can lead to less risk of dropping out. School policy can be developed to better integrate students into the school culture or, in effect, modify school culture so that it accommodates students who are otherwise seen as problems.

School, community, and societal risk factors are structural. At the school level, polices need to be enacted that engage students and their parents in the school culture. For example, school policies, such as zero-tolerance, tend to push students away from school, especially those at greater risk of dropping out. Schools need to think carefully through their policies. Policies at the community and societal level can work to counteract risk factors in these environments. Schools in communities with high levels of crime, unemployment, and other risk factors need to make schools safer and offer children the sense that schools and education can lead to greater economic attainment and security in their lives. Schools should also counteract the larger societal stereotypes about African American males by developing their self-esteem and greater understanding of the role African Americans have had in American society and culture.

Implementation

In this section we offer some recommendations for developing sound dropout prevention/intervention strategies. We begin by describing the traits of successful programs and then we offer a set of recommendations on how to choose a program. The general model we have in mind is depicted in Figure 20.1 as a set of sequential steps. For a listing and description of applicable programs, see Verdugo (2001).

Traits of Effective Programs

Three recent reports provide recommendations on the traits of effective dropout prevention and student achievement programs: Rossi (2000), U.S. Department of Education (2000), and Northwest Regional Laboratory (1999).

Rossi (2000) not only stresses the importance of services for at-risk students, but the author distinguishes program activities by grade level. The author lists five service-related traits of effective programs: they are not complex, they tend to coordinate services, they provide comprehensive services to address more than one risk factor, and they provide counseling and adult advocacy.

The author also draws a distinction between elementary, middle, and high schools. The author's reasoning is that risk factors differ by grade level and require the delivery of different services. In elementary schools,

Step 1 **Determine risk factors**	**Step 2** **Identify programs**	**Step 3** **Strategies**	**Step 4** **Implement program**
Use research to identify risk factors: individual, family, peer, school, community, and societal	Identify programs that may be of use to your school	Develop and implement your strategy	Implement the program(s) that you have selected
Develop and implement a risk assessment	Call and question program developers about their programs		Monitor and assess
			Invoke changes if necessary and continues to monitor

Figure 20.1. Sequential order of activities to reduce the dropout rate

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the author emphasizes the teaching of academic skills and the delivery of activities that foster greater attachment and engagement of students in school—after-school tutoring, enrichment activities, and adults as friends. In middle schools, the engagement process continues but stresses peer relations, flexible schedules, and counseling. Finally, in high school the emphasis is on making school relevant to work; paid work that is embedded in school activities.

A report by the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE, 2000) takes a slightly different approach. The report embeds activities for at-risk students within an effective schools program framework. First, it provides a description of effective schools that starts with the autonomy of both teachers and administrators in determining curriculum and instructional strategies. The report also stresses a climate that is child-centered and allows students to move at their own paces. Several other concepts are central to effective programs: monitoring of attendance, coordination of services, constant communication among schools in a cluster, and parent/community involvement.

Within this general framework, schools can then address at-risk students. For at-risk students, the report adds accelerated learning, family outreach, and training and information for parents so they can help their children at home. Several kinds of activities are used to enhance the relevance of school to one's later economic status. Students are counseled and are made aware of careers and job preparation. Moreover, families are made aware of various kinds of social support services such as child care and health care.

The 1999 report by the Northwest Regional Laboratory (NRL, 1999) also provides its views about effective programs. The NRL framework is similar to a business model compared to the Rossi and U.S. DOE reports. NRL suggests that effective programs are comprehensive for professional development, have measurable and achievable goals, have school staff support, and involve parents and the community. In addition, the NRL report indicates that effective programs also evaluate their activities and programs, and coordinate resources.

A synthesis of these three reports leads to the following traits of effective dropout programs:

- Are research-based
- Use a comprehensive strategy that addresses more than one risk factor
- Start in the early grades and make a long-term commitment
- Create a smaller, more personalized school environment
- Emphasize clear and equitably enforced rules and regulations

- Include vocational education that is well integrated with the academic program
- Include counseling that pays attention to careers, jobs, and life skills
- Stimulate a supportive and caring school environment
- Provide for coordinated and comprehensive services
- Emphasize academically enriching activities
- Allow flexible schedules
- Ensure autonomy for educators in terms of curriculum and instructional strategies
- Ensure systematic monitoring and follow-up of absences with teachers, students, and parents
- Provide special assistance and alternatives to promotion
- Encourage communication among schools in the cluster
- Stress parent and community involvement
- Provide professional development and training
- Have measurable goals and objectives and a comprehensive evaluation system.

Choosing a Dropout Program

How does one choose a program? A recent report by the American Institutes for Research (1999) outlines seven steps that education decision makers can take to choose programs that enhance the educational attainment of their students. A summary of these steps follows.

1. Identify the school's needs: conduct an assessment.
2. Investigate alternative approaches to the one/ones being considered.
3. Ask the program developers about
   - Availability of support
   - Cost
   - Effectiveness
   - Other schools that use the program
4. Call a random sample of schools (if possible) that are using the program. Program developers may have contacts in these schools. Then ask the following kinds of questions:
   - Why was this approach chosen?
   - How were implementation programs addressed?
   - What was the cost of implementation?
   - How effective is the approach?
5. Visit schools whenever possible and, in particular,
   - Visit classrooms.
   - Meet and talk to staff.
   - Talk to students, parents, and community members.

- Get a sense of the school's mission, its climate, and how it views students.

6. Match the developer's requirements with all available resources. Look at costs of
    - Training
    - Consultation
    - Materials
    - Staff
7. Put the decision to a vote.
    - Staff support is crucial to success.
    - About 80% of staff have to agree on the approach.

CONCLUSION

While a considerable body of research indicates that education is the primary vehicle for upward mobility and economic success, a significant proportion of the school-age population of the United States drops out every year before completing high school. Leaving school before completing a high school degree places these young people at significant economic disadvantage and also strains societal resources because an important proportion of people on welfare and those in the penal system are school dropouts. For young African American males, a large number will join the school dropout population.

The purpose of our chapter was to cover several areas of policy and research with the objective of offering some guidelines about developing solid dropout prevention/intervention strategies. The areas we covered included discussing the breadth and scope of the dropout problem among African American males; using a risk factor framework in reviewing the literature about school dropouts; and reviewing and summarizing the two dominant paradigms about the academic experiences of African American students, structural and cultural paradigms. We then synthesized both paradigms and developed a policy framework that could be used in addressing dropouts among African American males. The model stresses the interaction between structural and cultural explanations of dropping out and how such interactions can lead to useful dropout prevention/intervention strategies. A final section provides practical approaches for developing successful dropout prevention/intervention strategies and how to select an appropriate program.

Two conclusions emanate from our work. First, while African American males do not have the highest dropout rates among the three largest ethnic/racial groups in the country, they are high enough to cause considerable concern among education decision makers and concerned individuals. Second, dropping out is a complex process, as evidenced by our review of the risk factor literature. Moreover, it is also clear that relying solely on structural or cultural paradigms as explanations is wrong and will lead to flawed strategies and programs. Indeed, our work suggests using both paradigms in addressing risk factors and then tailoring a strategy that is comprehensive, starts early, and engages in consistent monitoring and evaluation.

NOTES

1. Throughout this chapter Whites refer to non-Hispanic Whites, and Blacks to non-Hispanic Blacks.
2. Data are from Table 106 from the *Digest of Education Statistics, 2000.* Refer to www.nces.gov/pubs2001/digest/dt106.html.
3. Kaufman (2001) found that as a result of different methods of data collection and target populations, data from the Department of Education and the Bureau of the Census yield different estimates on the number of students who drop out and complete high school. These problems are exacerbated for minority populations.
4. We should point out that associating with delinquent peers does not necessarily lead to dropping out. Dana Haynie (2001) used a networking framework and found that youth who associate with delinquent peers and exhibit delinquent behavior are those who are closer to influentials within the group, are popular, and are have relationships will many members of the group.
5. A recent school policy that we expect to have significant dropout implications is zero tolerance. Russ Skiba and his colleagues have argued that such policies are at the origin of greater expulsions and suspensions among Black and Hispanic students (see Skiba and Peterson 1999; Verdugo 2000). Such policies have the effect of further distancing students from school.
6. Research on the effect school climate has on student achievement, and factors related to achievment, such as teachers' job satisfactioni, has a history of nearly forty years. There are currently two views about what constitutes a quality school environment: bureaucracy or community. The current research suggests that communities are the best environments. See Verdugo et al. (1997) for a review and analysis of teachers' job satisfaction. Also see Scheerens (1997) for an excellent review of the effective schools models and theories.
7. This body of research appears to contradict the earlier research we reviewed concerning policy and academic standards. The crucial difference, though, is that the present body of research introduces the notion that students are cared for and supported in an environment where failure is not an option.
8. The view that schools are feminine environments is not limited to African American male youth. In studies of working class "lads" in England, Willis (1977) found similar views. In Willis' study, work class lads opted to pursue

dead-end "male" jobs rather than use education as a mechanism for upward mobility.

9. Duneier (1992) points out that inner city communities have strong working-class segments. Families and individuals tied to these segments of the inner city exhibit strongly held mainstream values.

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CHAPTER 21

SCHOOL A OR SCHOOL B?

The Nexus between Race and School Choice

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INTRODUCTION

Brown v. Board of Education I (1954) sought to address the American political apartheid that created racial division within public schools and the larger society. The landmark ruling, in effect, mandated "separate but equal" as unconstitutional while *de jure* segregation and its vestiges continued. A year later in 1955, *Brown v. Board of Education II* then ruled that desegregation needed to occur with "all deliberate speed." These federally regulated policies were met with resistance and hesitation by many southern states. Some southern states, however, complied with the desegregation mandate and implemented "freedom of choice plans." The choice plans provided parents with the opportunity to select or choose a school for their children to attend. The ruling of *Green v. County School Board of New Kent*

Surmounting All Odds, pages 523–545
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County (1968) outlawed freedom of choice plans because they perpetuated racial segregation and discrimination.

The earlier, conservative arguments of school choice, as proffered by Milton Friedman (1962), however, emerged as a competing force for the race-centered mandates issued in *Brown I.* His book, *Capitalism and Freedom,* regarded public education as a free marketplace that maximized consumer interests via bureaucratic freedom of schools and parental autonomy. The class-based interest stems from a privatized perspective that minimizes the level of federal involvement within educational processes. The class-based approach to quality education and schooling as posited by Friedman emerged as a competing challenge for the original intent of *Brown I.* The undergirding ideologies of "race-centered desegregation" and "class-based school choice" nonetheless consider the fundamental tenets of equal educational opportunity (i.e., effective schooling, adequate resources, equitable funding, etc.) as the desired outcome. Such a perspective forges a nexus between race and school choice, although the implementation processes to achieving equal educational opportunity are different.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Public education is in a state of resegregation. Resegregation has denied equitable racial accommodation and resource distribution within the post-*Brown* era to African American children and others similarly situated. These marginalized effects have limited the availability of opportunities and access for traditionally underrepresented groups that largely comprise our nation's public schools. Stakeholders must revert the resegregative vessels that disproportionately and continuously move African Americans and students of color within lower academically tracked classes, underresourced schools, and inadequately funded schools (Irvine, 1990; Kozol, 1991; Lagemann & Miller, 1996; Lomotey & Teddlie, 1996; Orfield, Eaton, & the Harvard Project on School Desegregation, 1996). The present system of public education invariably reproduces a hodgepodge of racial and class stratification. Neither meritocratic ideals nor democratic promises become realized under such conditions. Successful matriculation into collegiate or university settings thereby becomes a dream deferred while the American public education dilemma continues.

One proposed remedy to address the K–12 dilemma is school choice (Carnoy, 2000; Goldhaber, 2000; Parker & Margonis, 1999; Willie, 1991). Researchers demonstrate how educational complexities and consequences undergird "choice" as a mechanism for public school reform. The ability to forge equality and equity within educational policies and practices is nonetheless challenged by what constitutes quality schooling among various stakeholders. Brighouse (2000) situates school choice into two categories: (1) public–private and (2) public. The primary difference between these types of choices is that public–private utilizes taxpayers' dollars to fund private or parochial education. Public choice, however, uses specialized curriculum and subject matter to attract racially and socioeconomically diverse students to schools that are outside or inside a particular public school district. This type of public choice does not involve the transfer of public dollars to support private schooling.

The roles of responsibility and accountability are key components in creating educational policies, prescribing practices, and assessing outcomes of school choice. How decisions get made and the factors impacting decision making provide a critical framework for examining value systems and expectations of public education. It is important to understand how the "choice" for school choice is determined. Boyd, Crowson, and van Geel (1994) asserts that rational choice stems from the notion that "all social phenomena are derivable from the properties of individuals, after taking into account the setting in which they are located" (p. 129). The goals of school choice must somehow align with stakeholder needs. The alignment is fundamentally necessary to make school choice an alternative option for public education. In effect, the idea is that local constituents gain greater control of the plight of public schools or the effectiveness of school choice mandates within a given district.

The arguments of Lisa Delpit (1988) in her article, "The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children," would perhaps term this mutually interactive phenomenon that occurs within decision-making processes of a "culture of power." Delpit suggests that the positionality of race and class impacts the magnitude of stakeholder power. In effect, this status determines whether or not individuals gain access to informational networks. Delpit posits three different characteristics of the "culture of power":

- There are codes or rules for participating in the power; that is, there is a culture of power.
- The rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power.
- If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier (p. 282).

The "culture of power" is very important to processes involving educational domains. From one perspective, Charles Mills (1997) posits that within an epistemological framework of race, Whites have collectively benefited from racial privilege. Mills further argues that while Whites may not "cash in" on their racial privilege, such opportunity and option remain at their disposal to do so and thereby reap the benefits. White privilege can lead to higher levels of quality access and influential networks that impact the development of educational policies and the implementation of educational practices. These exclusive networks can reproduce the "culture of power" by limiting the domains of educational policy and practice to those individuals of like characteristics. The "culture of power" thereby operates as a web of privilege and access for preferred constituents. In effect, individuals with racial privilege can enact policies and practices for all children attending public schools. More importantly, while the quest to achieve high academic outcomes is the objective, all children in educational settings may or may not benefit from the specified interests of those enacting policies and practices.

The role of politics must also be considered within the implementation of educational policies. Joel Spring (1998) provides the following analysis of power in public education: "Outside individuals attempt to use education as an instrument of power.... Educational administrators struggle to protect or improve their position within the educational bureaucracy" (p. 71). Particularly in smaller cities, the confluence of power and politics can more easily manipulate how educational policies get developed and implemented (Spring, 1998). The structures of power and politics are more centralized and exclusive within smaller cities. It is important, therefore, to examine the impact of power and politics within educational domains of smaller cities. More specifically, it is important to examine the role of public school choice in a small city as the preferred educational reform mechanism. Issues related to race and rational decision making will also be included within this discussion of public school choice.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

School choice policies consist of both public and public–private models. Public choice offers a variety of plans, most of which do not use educational vouchers (Cookson, 1994). Magnet schools, in particular, are one of the most widely accepted forms of public choice (Metz, 1991; Smrekar & Goldring, 1999). Clarie Smrekar and Elaine Goldring (1999) reveal that the number of magnet schools as a form of "public" choice have increased since the case of *Morgan v. Kerrigan* (1976). This case was accepted at the federal court level on the basis that magnet schools can successfully effectuate school desegregation and voluntary student transportation through its use of specialized curriculum to attract diverse interests. Racial balance is more likely to be forged, which is a necessary step to achieve school integration.

John Chubb and Terry Moe (1989) and Chester Finn (1991) argue that public–private or the educational voucher approach creates competition for public schools. Choice offers parental autonomy as they are afforded the opportunity to "choose" enrollment into private schools that presumably offer better quality education. Diane Ravitch (1997) considers parents, and in effect, students, as the primary beneficiaries of choice. This perspective posits choice as the source for "empowered consumers rather than hapless clients ignored by an unresponsive bureaucracy" (pp. 254–255). The arguments of Ravitch would suggest parents, and in effect, students, are the choice beneficiaries or winners. In the book *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* (1996), Chubb and Moe would further concur that schools in a free market encounter less bureaucracy and structural impositions. Choice advocates identify a fundamental relationship between the level of school bureaucracy and the academic performance of students. The idea is that less bureaucratic governance results in higher standards and outcomes within educational processes.

Smrekar and Goldring (1999) provide arguments that identify academic reputation and pedagogy as the foremost reasons underpinning the preference of magnet schools. Their research nonetheless concludes that the magnet programs in Cincinnati, Ohio, and St. Louis, Missouri, have further widened the gap between the "social haves" and the "social have-nots" and are not able to achieve socioeconomic diversity. Willie (1991) and Taylor and Alves (1999), however, argue that magnet schools should operate under the rubrics of "controlled choice." This position identifies a fundamental need for policies and procedure to ensure that the goals and objectives of magnet programs are achieved. Dan Goldhaber (2000), however, considers the following positions as underlying "choice" assumptions: Some good schools are delivering education in a more efficient manner than the traditional public schools that are currently perceived by many to be failing. Parents know to, and will, choose good schools. The variables of school efficiency and parental involvement nonetheless becomes problematic when discussing matters of "public–private" and "public" choiced education and how they each get defined and later implemented.

Chubb and Moe (1989) and Finn (1991), however, would posit the public–private model as a means to achieving parental autonomy. The idea is that parental autonomy allows more direct involvement within the educational processes of children. This level of interaction is necessary to facilitate self-sufficiency and independence among parents and other stakeholders. Margonis and Parker (1999) nonetheless consider public–private choice as complicating the ability to achieve equity and equality in public education. Those individuals who are economically challenged and racially marginalized will not reap the presumed "choices" and "benefits" of educational vouchers, as this particular type of model suggests.

Douglas Archbald (2000) and the article *Limits of Choice* (1996) would further concur that public–private choice evokes forms of stratification that leads to competition for teachers, students, resources, and other necessary components of positive schooling experiences. Too many factors impact the educational processes of children that do not always meet the cultural and social climate of school settings. Martin Carnoy (2000) suggests that historical perspectives about private marketeering and public education are very important in understanding whether or not school choice can increase levels of access. Carnoy argues that equal educational opportunities, as matters of privilege and power, have traditionally favored Whites. Choice policies must consider the predetermined racial elitism undergirding education and schooling ideologies.

Kimberly West (1994) further argues that the public choice model of magnet schools promote ideologies that suggest inherent racial discrimination. Her research study finds that in order to convince Whites to attend schools with African Americans, magnet schools must be marketed as "schools for the gifted children" (p. 2573). Therefore, the interest–convergence theory, as posited by Derrick Bell (1980), cannot be negated within this discussion. This theory suggests the interests of Blacks will be achieved only when they converge with the interests of Whites. These conflicting but somewhat shared paradigms therefore evoke the following question: Does public school choice seek to accommodate race-based needs and/or the ability to employ rational decision making according to a set of criterion (i.e., resources, networks, etc.)?

West (1994) further provides arguments that demonstrate how magnet schools utilize practices that foster resegregation. The article describes how the inner-city Rockford, Illinois School District implements a two-tiered curriculum in which many African Americans and other students of color get disproportionately placated in the lower-track classes. The arguments of Ladson-Billings (1994) and Trent (1990) would inherently suggest that teachers should implement racialized pedagogy and curriculum in these magnet settings to alter the disproportionate number of African American students in the lower-track classes. Yon, Nesbit, and Algozzine (1998) further argue that racial minority parents who send their children to magnet schools experience a certain amount of racial isolation. The study concludes that these parents are less likely to participate in their children's education.

The literature review has provided various arguments surrounding the impact of school choice. The implications of public and public–private choice must clearly be understood as having different policy concerns. The gap in much of the literature, however, has particularly resonated in its failure to address the implications of school choice in small cities, particularly as it pertains to public choice. Many school districts today, both urban and rural, are implementing magnet programs. Magnet programs as a form of public school choice were first accepted during the 1970s as the means to forge racial desegregation within large, inner-city areas. Therefore, it is important to understand the implications of a magnet school in a small city and the inherent roles of politics and power upon educational policies and practices.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Framework

The research study on public school choice has been conducted as a qualitative analysis. Three different methodologies have been employed to demonstrate how the policies and practices of one magnet school flourish within a small city. Those methods include post-positivist, conflict theory, and interpretivism. Fraser (1989) proffers that policies warrant a post-positivist approach that addresses the *discourses about needs* as well as the *politics of need interpretation.* The discourses about needs particularly identify those elements that contribute to the "need becoming a need." The discourse, as a mode of expression, provides an outlet for uncovering claims, which, in this case, are educational concerns. Fraser's model further acknowledges that an inherent process occurs to shape and thereby manifest those needs into existence. The discourse tends to be rooted within "in-order-to" relations that are necessary to achieve a desired outcome. *For example, A needs B in order to C.*

The conflict theory, however, challenges those notions of educational settings as unaffected institutions of learning. Conflict theorists posit that public schools are impacted by societal stratification of racial categories. Where individuals fit on the ladder of racial hierarchies determine the quality and quantity of resources that are distributed in school settings. Hurn (1993) states that:

> Conflict theorists assert that we live in a divided and conflict-ridden society where groups compete for the control of the educational system.... Groups who compete for control of schooling use the rhetoric of societal needs to conceal the fact that it is their interests and their demands they are trying to advance.... Conflict theorists believe that it is always a struggle for power and status: whose values and ideals will be taught to the young, and whose children will obtain the most desirable jobs. Conflict theorists see this struggle between groups as unequal. Existing elites, though they must make compromises and bargains with other groups, almost always have the upper hand because of their superior resources and their superior resources and their control over the means of communication. (p. 58)

Conflict theorists recognize the influence of power within educational settings. Educational policy and practices are seemingly naturally prescribed to fit the interests of homogenous traditions. Schools, in effect, reproduce social inequalities via the inherent tensions between the "racial haves" and the "racial have-nots." The conflict theory provides the analytic framework for examining the structural implications of race and power within public school choice.

Earl Babbie (1998) further asserts that interpretivism aims at "discovering how the subject of study understands his or her life" (p. 281). This process stems from the interaction between the individual (stakeholder) and the social organization (school). Interpretivism provides the means in which to examine the implications of public school choice upon primary stakeholders within a small city. DeMarrais and LeCompte (1999) further posit that interpretivists assert the notion that reality is not fixed, but instead reality gains legitimacy through the construction of meaning through social roles. They assert:

> Interpretivists believe that human beings respond to each other and to their surroundings not so much on the basis of any objective or inherent meanings but on the basis of meanings assigned to people and setting by the people in them.... Interaction and the assignment of meaning are affected by people's past experiences and beliefs, their current experiences in the given setting, and what they come to believe as interaction unfolds. (pp. 20–22)

The role of public school choice is significant to the implications of rational decision making since its goals must somehow align with the needs of the school and stakeholder. In light of post-positivism, the conflict theory, and interpretivism, the following questions are used to guide the study:

1. Why did public school choice become an option for this district?
2. What are the objectives of public school choice and how does this magnet school seek to achieve them?
3. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of public school choice in this small city?

The study is not exhaustive and there are some limitations. One limitation is that other magnet schools in small cities are needed within the study. The findings of this particular magnet school may be unique to its constituents and the community. The issues of power and politics may work differently in other settings. Generalizations and assumptions thereby will not be stated about public school choice. Another limitation is that more interviews are needed. The voices of students and classroom observations would have provided a practical outlook regarding how the policies of the magnet program are being received and implemented. The voices of those individuals who did not agree with the placement of this magnet school could have rendered a more representative understanding of the roles of power, policies, and politics within this particular community. This study should nonetheless provide some thematic implications and indications of magnet programming in a small city as race and/or rational based.

Site and Participants of the Study and Data Collection Measures

The study is conducted at an elementary magnet school in a small midwestern city (less than 36,000 residents). Midwestern Elementary Magnet School is the pseudonym used to reference this school and other pseudonyms are used for the participants. The stated mission of the Midwestern Elementary Magnet School is to provide the opportunity for each student to develop intellectually, socially, physically, and creatively by providing quality curriculum and instruction that focuses on reading and mathematics. The participants within this study included the superintendent, assistant superintendent, two school board members, two teachers, and four parents. The racial and gender breakdown include the following: five African Americans, six Whites, nine males, and two females.

The superintendent, assistant superintendent, school board members, and principal were classified as administrators because of their direct capacity and nonrevolving influence in the policymaking and implementation processes of the magnet program. Teachers and parents were categorized as nonadministrators because of their indirect capacity and revolving influence to impact policy implementation. The principal suggested particular nonadministrators for this study because of their high degree of involvement within school activities and their outspokenness regarding issues. Interviews and document reviews were used as data collection measures. Ten interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis, lasting about 45 minutes, and were held in the principal's office or a conference room. Document analyses of the magnet school applications, handbook, 2000 report card, and school board minutes were also employed.

FINDINGS

The study reveals that the primary objective of the Midwestern Elementary Magnet School resonates in its quest to provide a nontraditional form of education and schooling to attract students from various backgrounds. Public school choice in this study functioned from two different arenas: (1) school organization and (2) school operations. School organization is defined as the theoretical structure or domain for developing educational policy mandates. The recurring themes of school organization in this study include *balanced calendar, school and parent accountability*, and *enhanced opportunity*. School operations are defined as those educational practices or initiatives used to achieve desired policy outcomes. The recurring themes of school operations are *parental involvement, portfolio grading*, and *dress codes*. These categorical placements of school organization and school operations nonetheless provide a more simplified means to examine the complexities and implications unique to public school choice in this small city.

ANALYSES

Public School Choice as an Option

These findings revealed significant information about the implications of public school choice as an option for this Midwestern Public School District. Inherent within the implications resonated this undergirding belief that a "choiced" education provided less bureaucracy and more opportunity. The traditional system of bureaucratic governance in public education was considered a deterrent to resolving matters of scheduling, curriculum, and other kinds of educational policy issues. The reform mechanism of public school choice thereby allowed this school organizational structure to become less bureaucratic to enhance accountability while embracing the school operational feature of increased parental involvement within policy implementation realms on the local level. Mr. Leon Stewart, the superintendent, stated the following:

> We started off wanting it to be a charter school and we wanted to be free of state mandates and controls. We wanted to do some bench marking based upon research and to do that, as established by the state, we found early on that we could not accomplish that.... Still with the choice in mind and still looking at this as an opportunity to explore in a clinical way some new teaching methods and parental involvement methods, we chose to go to a magnet setting...

This response has demonstrated how the Midwestern Public School District desired an alternative approach that challenged traditional notions of education and schooling. From one perspective, this district chose a laboratory approach that was primarily conducive to their administrative needs or administratively centered, least bureaucratic interference. Mr. Brian Taylor, the assistant superintendent, states that "our present school district certainly has utilized the magnet program not for desegregation purposes but for purposes for trying to create a laboratory school, if you will, that will allow us to work its best practices." The laboratory approach would allow revolving educational polices and practices to be implemented within school operations. The process of changing these policies and practices would not require as many procedures or much protocol and thereby alleviate the fundamental tenets of a system of checks and balances.

Another perspective, however, would identify this Midwestern Elementary Magnet School as promoting an educational process that is primarily parent centered. The parent-centered approach inherently locates parents as the central most important figures within the school operations of this small-city magnet program. The academic performance of students and the success of the magnet program depend heavily on parental involvement. Mr. Leon Stewart, the superintendent, also asserted the following about the magnet program:

> We have 6,000 students in the community. Midwest draws about 300 of those youngsters from all over the community providing choice based upon a set of criteria for attending the school.... What I mean by that is that it is 45 days on and 15 days off.... There are times when the balanced calendar schools are in session and the traditional calendar schools are out of session. Both schools however operate 174-day schedules.... I think it provides an opportunity to enroll their kids, who agree to participate, give a certain amount of hours of volunteer effort and decision making at the school and to be more actively involved in what happens at the school than in some of the other traditional schools.

The application process entails completing the magnet school application and if more students apply than there are positions, a lottery drawing takes place. Preference is given to those applicants who already have siblings within the school. This process could easily lead to matters of discrimination according to race as determined by the number of African American or White families already enrolled within the school. The application process, however, is not based on qualifications, but levels of access as determined by the enrollment of families.

The Midwestern district further employs the balanced calendar as a school organizational structure as the means to accommodate parental involvement. Parents enter into a contractual agreement with the school consenting that they agree to volunteer time at the school, attend parent/teacher conferences, and assume responsibility for their child's behavior. The failure of the parents to fulfill these obligations will result in the dismissal of the child from the school. Public school choice as an option in this small city has emerged as an integrative relationship between balanced calendar scheduling, school and parent accountability, and parental involvement.

The need for more opportunities was also an issue of school organization that was linked to school operations of academic requirements. There was great concern for a strict curriculum that focused on reading and math. These subject areas were considered as necessary components for being competent inside and outside of school settings. Mrs. JoAnn Smith, an African American teacher, stated the following:

> I guess I would say that it has basically overall changed to keep up with society. There is a strong need to focus on reading and math skills with all children across the district. I think it provides opportunities for children across the district as a whole for all children that are in need for something different. A different style of learning, a different approach to learning…

Inherent within this response resonates that change is warranted in the educational curriculum and different pedagogical strategies must be employed to maximize learning potentials. Traditional methods are no longer achieving desirable outcomes. Smith further responds on matters of pedagogy:

> Basically we don't grade. We grade on expectation. It's just like a little expectation for each grade level and they are sent home so the parents know exactly what their child is learning each quarter and what is expected of them. Those are measured by the end to see if the child has met or exceeded that particular objective…. Most schools don't do that. Parents have no idea what is expected of their child at each grade level…

The portfolio system of grading operates from the perspective that students have various learning styles. This nontraditional approach seeks to accommodate the educational differences that diversity entails, thereby diminishing the opportunity to treat such differences as educational deficits. The portfolio grading system is an equitable means of assessing the academic performance of students, particularly for the diverse educational needs of African Americans within this school setting. Public school choice as an option in this district operated from a rational perspective as demonstrated by constituent needs.

Objective of Public School Choice via Magnet Programming

The findings clearly reveal that administrators focused on both arenas pertaining to school organization and school operations while the nonadministrators' concerns are more specific and concentrated on the practical component of school operations. The study suggests that the objective of the Midwestern Elementary Magnet School is to provide a nontraditional approach to education and schooling in order to attract students from various backgrounds. One approach that addresses this objective is within the school operations of the school climate, particularly as it pertains to the dress codes. According to Mr. Wilson Jones, a White school board member:

> We have tried to remove as many economic barriers as we can with dress code that we have here. People don't have to worry about or be concerned about the fact that they may not be wearing the same type of clothes that somebody else is. And in this environment that could be a distraction and we have removed that as a distraction.

The school seeks to eliminate any barriers that may potentially threaten the academic performance of its students. Likewise, the formal dress code in this magnet school decreases the cost of clothes that parents spend on their children. The use of a dress code to alleviate competition between the students and to lower the cost of clothing for parents demonstrates a rational approach toward schooling and education.

From both theoretical and practical domains, these findings further demonstrate that the outcomes of any educational initiative are highly contingent upon the way in which roles are assumed and the performance levels of those roles by stakeholders. These roles may range from direct input to active participation within educational activities. Academic outcomes consist of shared responsibility and accountability that are not exclusively determined by the type of program. Mr. Brian Taylor, the assistant superintendent, states the following:

> So we literally and figuratively erased the blackboard and said, okay, all the gloves are off.... Our committee was comprised of not only educators including administrators and teachers, it also was comprised of parents and non-parent community members. We look at it really from the stakeholder point of view, which is everyone within the community.

This position demonstrates how various stakeholders are considered necessary to the early stages of educational policymaking. Those stakeholders who have access to the "culture of power" will be contacted from the beginning of the process for their input. The rationale behind this particular magnet school, in effect, serves as a direct manifestation of underpinning ideologies that are unique to the immediate community.

These particular stakeholders likewise gain legitimacy and their voices are more likely to be considered when pertinent issues arise throughout the school year. Particular stakeholders or those who have assumed active roles easily become considered the voice(s) of authority that, in effect, makes it difficult to later become part of the policymaking body in any kind of influential way. Mr. Chris Mitchell, the principal, states the following:

> So we are definitely a community vision. We've had community and parent involvement from the inception and still do.... Parents are members of action teams plus they have their own action teams to make sure that we are following the vision. We have community advisory board that is made up of a lot the major players and industries in town. The Economic Development Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the County Board and city government with representatives from all kinds of places that work with us.

The rational perspective of choice is presented as an equal educational opportunity. Equal educational opportunity becomes synonymous with employed democratic processes of involving various constituents in the policy decision making. This process further demonstrates how this form of public school choice has implemented a system of accountability. The magnet program operates according to the shared accountability of parents and school administrators.

The same perspective has other connotations when specifically examining the practical element of school operations. There are problematic concerns surrounding the implications of race and access that emerge within this discussion. For example, the Black church has historically served as the mode through which African Americans have been notified about any pertinent issue(s) affecting them. From local to state to federal campaigns, politicians actively seek the Black church for support during elections. The response of Taylor, the assistant superintendent, however, does not mention any use of the Black church as a vehicle for informing the African American community about the magnet program and its plight to improve educational opportunity for all students. Such perspective evokes the following questions: Were sufficient steps taken to attract African American children to this nontraditional educational setting? Was there an equitable representation of African Americans during the policy formulation of the magnet school?

Educational initiatives require particular means or modes for implementation as well as the necessary support to sustain them. The quality of access and opportunity that stakeholders have, in effect, determines whether or not they become viable contributors to policy procedures. These networking affiliations must somehow be linked to influential sources within the educational policy arena in order to gain policy foresights and/or insights. According to Mr. John Cole, a White parent:

> Like I said, whether or not that's truly the objective of our goal of the school, but the way that I would see the accomplishment is that this school operates by word of mouth.... So I guess that being what I would state to be one of the objectives or one of the purposes of the school is just by word of mouth.... It's just by the parent's choice to whether or not they want to put their child in this school.

The vessels of race operate on systemic and individualized levels. The White parent has demonstrated how the quality of personal and professional networks is significantly important to the access of educational opportunity. This response, however, is blinded to the existence and effects of racial privilege in its assertion of "it's just by the parent's choice to whether or not they want to put their child in this school." Any kind of choice (i.e., public, public–private, charter, etc.) gets objectified and considered available to anyone who desires it. These findings have demonstrated how public school choice is a subjective matter of access and a "culture of power" that becomes defined and delimited by a host of factors. The objective of this magnet school thereby operates from both rational and race-based perspectives.

Advantages and/or Disadvantages of Public School Choice in This Small City

The research study has revealed advantages and/or disadvantages in this magnet program. Two advantages have consistently emerged within this study, which include parental involvement and dress codes. Parental involvement is the primary link between student performance and school accountability. The following administrator and two nonadministrators posit these final comments on the necessity of parental involvement:

> I think the choice itself is everything. The fact that its known that parents become actively involved in the lives of their children and in the education of their children, attendance improves, discipline improves, value for education improves.... This is when we went to the balanced calendar approach to it.
>
> I also like the point that we actually give parents the opportunity to come in and get involved in the school and they know from the time that school starts that this is part of their job too to be involved with their child's education.

A mandatory requirement for parental involvement demands the need for parents to actively demonstrate responsibility for their child and their child's school. The balanced calendar provides the flexible schedule to accommodate the needs for parental involvement in this particular magnet school.

The remaining advantage within this form of public school choice resonates with the dress code. The dress code is considered cost-effective to parents while creating a nonthreatening, noncompetitive environment for students to engage in their schoolwork. Ms. Lily Thompson, an African American parent, and Mr. Lucas Shephard, a White parent, assert final comments regarding the dress code:

> I will start off with the dress code. I love the dress code. The advantage of having the dress code here, it keeps kids neat. They are well groomed and they take that with them. When they are outside of the school, they are used to their clothes being neat and I like that. My daughter is in junior high, she is too neat almost.
>
> The uniforms, to me that's the biggest plus and it draws off of that.... It draws off of that there is no boundary identified by clothing and myself working at the prison, I can see where clothing exemplifies certain things and this alleviates this and allows the children to get interested in their focus of studies and not a competitiveness as far as how they look.

Both arguments for the dress code stem from rational perspectives that seek to accommodate the needs as identified by the parents in this community. For the African American parent, her child has continued to dress neatly, although she is no longer within this magnet school. The ideals of the dress code have remained with the student and she practices such ideals within her own life. For the White parent, the dress code is a means for coping with the connotations associated with clothing. Those connotations suggest that material goods or clothes define a student's worth (i.e., intellectual, financial, social, etc.).

The same argument, however, has raised an undergirding issue in juxtaposition of this response by another White parent:

> Well, let me go back to the kids wearing uniforms. There is a lot of non-conflict of what people wear so you don't hear other kids making fun of other kids. They are trying to give them different kinds of rules in conduct and stuff like that.

Such a response is centralizing dress codes as an agent for maintaining order within the school. This perspective is legitimate and well-taken. Nonetheless, this particular role for the dress code evokes race-based concerns for African American students in this particular type of school setting. Jay MacLeod (1987), in his book, *Ain't No Making It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood,* concludes in his study that many lower-income schools that are primarily comprised of African Americans and other minority groups gear their school operations toward disciplinarian measures. This tactic inherently prepares minorities for subservient roles in schools and later the workplace, thereby weakening their desires to seek post-secondary education. In lieu of MacLeod's argument and the reasons as stated by the parents for the need of a dress code, does the dress code serve as a means of cost and climate efficiency or does the dress code serve as an agent of control? Given the demands of racial diversity, how do African American students internalize the dress code? These are some serious questions that should be considered within this discussion of the dress code in public school choice.

The final theme that consistently emerged within this study was the grading system. This magnet used a portfolio system of grading that allowed each student to be graded according to expectations and a set of objectives. Students are able to proceed according to their own learning pace. Both the administrators and nonadministrators generally favored this portfolio system of grading. They considered this system of grading to benefit the students greatly in their academic performance within the magnet school. Two of the nonadministrators stated the following:

> Another advantage is that I just like the grading concept, the expectations and how it gets explained to parents exactly what is expected of their child K–5. So far the kids that have gone up to the middle school, they function just fine with no problems.
>
> Another area is the area of grading. Many students see an A and a F. You know that could mean different things to different students. But to see the progress, you know if you have achieved it or not. You know. What's the difference between an A or a C? You might have achieved it, it might have been an A. If I didn't achieve it, it might have been a C. It's either one or another.... Either I got the grade or I didn't. A, C, D, or B+ versus an A–.

Both of the nonadministrators identify the portfolio system of grading as conducive to a gradual process of learning. This system treats learning as ongoing and continuing, which cannot be defined by or minimized to a letter grade. These nonadministrators adamantly demonstrate their concern about whether or not the students acquire a certain level of knowledge-based materials as opposed to getting a grade. Inherent within both of the responses resonates the notion that if students are adequately and thoroughly prepared in their academic coursework, then those students will succeed throughout their educational matriculation. This perspective has revealed how the portfolio grading system suggests that academic success is measured by the quality of academic preparations.

While the administrators do concur that this nontraditional form of grading offers a different approach to assessment, some of the administrators nonetheless raise different viewpoints regarding the long-term implications of the portfolio system of grading. The administrators revealed that when students from the nontraditional setting of Midwestern Elementary Magnet transitioned into more traditional modes of schooling, some mixed academic performance levels should be expected. Particularly for African American children, these transitioning effects may be more devastating to their academic matriculation since African American children are disproportionately placed in lower-ability groups.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research study on public school choice in a small city examined the impact of politics and power upon African American children in this Midwestern Elementary Magnet School. The positionalities of race and/or rational-based ideologies juxtaposed with recurring themes affected the academic implications of public school choice. The administrators and nonadministrators responded differently to race and/or rational perspectives regarding the objectives and options for this nontraditional education and schooling. The responses, in effect, were largely connected to the stakeholders' level of access to the "culture of power." The "culture of power" contained those influential networks that impacted educational policy procedures. In theoretical development, the use of nontraditional education and schooling in this district to attract students of various backgrounds provides an equitable approach to public education. However, in policy implementation, the invisible hand of power and politics controlled the role of the stakeholder, thereby promoting a system of stratified access and opportunity.

The first question, which focused on public school choice as an option for this Midwestern Public School District, found that both the administrators and nonadministrators desired a change in traditional education and schooling. The study revealed that the options within this district were approached primarily from rational-based perspectives. The needs of the community were assessed and the demands of the larger society were considered. The administrators stated that they also conducted research on best school practices as it pertained to matters of curriculum, scheduling, parental involvement, and so on. This form of public school choice was unique to this small city because the district used a balanced calendar approach that promoted year-round schooling. The use of a choice school via magnet program did not only accommodate the need for a year-round approach and structured academic curriculum, but also the more important need, the need for parental involvement in public education. Students attended school for 45 days on and 15 days off while parents consented to participating in school functions and volunteering in school activities.

This study suggests that the rational perspective was not necessarily the wrong approach to assume when considering the options within matters of public education. Research has shown that the current state of public education is failing our children, particularly African Americans, and thereby change is warranted (Irvine, 1990; Kozol, 1991; Lagemann & Miller, 1996; Lomotey & Teddlie, 1996; Orfield et al., 1996). The respondents provide information regarding how the stakeholders are chosen for the initial development of this choice reform, the administrators also stated that stakeholders are to be contacted throughout the year for continued input, and the administrators referred to the choice program as a laboratory school that is seeking to find what best practices maximize the potential of students. Therefore, there are not any blatant attempts to hide personal agendas. However, there are still fundamental questions in this matter: At what point do new stakeholders enter into the policymaking realm regarding the best practices and what influence will they have? In lieu of the "culture of power" or influential networks, how does this Midwestern Public School District accommodate the needs of students, particularly African Americans, who do not have access to this form of public school choice and its nontraditional approach to education and schooling? The study suggests that the undergirding educational policy issue within this small city, thereby emerges as less about need for choice in public schools, but more about the need for change in how public schools are run.

The second question, which focused on the objectives of public school choice within this district, revealed that public school choice provided a nontraditional form of education and schooling to attract students from various backgrounds. It is important to note that this particular public school of choice is similar to traditional magnet programs because the magnet school is structured according to the demands of its specialized curriculum. This form of public school choice, however, differs in its use of balanced calendar scheduling and the requirement of parental involvement. Some interesting findings emerge as the objective is being achieved that have both rational and race-based perspectives. One finding reveals that the magnet school program is the means to which the educational concerns in this community get addressed. This particular notion stems from a rational perspective since the needs of the community were assessed and the use of a magnet school would provide the best alternative approach to traditional education within this district.

Issues of race, however, came forth within the discussion when considering issues of stakeholder access and information dissemination. Stakeholders were contacted based on their access to influential networks within a local community. Otherwise, how would the school district know who to contact and for what? These networks then were able to determine how the information was to be distributed and/or who was to receive the information. While the study reveals that many media outlets publicized the new magnet school in the district, the study did not reveal that these media sources extended open invitations to the larger community during the planning stages. Likewise, the study did not mention that Black churches were contacted as medians. The study, however, reveals that the "culture of power" did control the number of Whites and African Americans in the initial stages of policymaking. Such position later impact the level of influence in future decisions for both groups within the Midwestern Elementary Magnet School. Therefore, the study suggests that the "culture of power" in this form of public school choice must be controlled through quality access via influential, informational medians of all stakeholders.

The third question, which focused on the advantages and disadvantages of public school choice in this small city, reveals that public school choice is significantly concerned with issues related to school operations rather than school organization. The recurring advantages and disadvantages of dress codes and portfolio grading are components of school operations. The study did not reveal any advantages or disadvantages related to school organization. Such a finding does not suggest that the arenas of school organization are not important to the constituents in this small city. The study has revealed that the balanced calendar schedule, school and parent accountability, and enhanced opportunity are underlying reasons related to the "choice" of this magnet school. The study, however, does suggest that stratified levels of access and opportunity during the early developmental stages of school organization arenas could have easily impacted the type of response. All of these respondents are known to have access to this critical arena, which, in some regard, has transcended racial and socioeconomic distinctions. The level and acceptance of input related to race and socioeconomic status nonetheless are still valid factors within policy developmental stages. The study suggests that the negation of identifying school organization as an advantage or disadvantage situate school organization as a neutral and objective component of public school choice in this small city and thereby serve as hidden effects of the "culture of power" and perceived as rational.

Such an important finding thereby evokes the following question: Can the Midwestern Public School District achieve their educational needs without resorting to a system of choice that inherently leads to stratification? The answer is yes. The educational reform of site-based management operates from a decentralized system of governance that redistributes power among school administrators and the community and stakeholders at large (Carlson, 1996; Elmore, 1990; Terry, 1994). Site-based management is devoid of bureaucratic involvement since decisions are made on the local level. Nonetheless, this decentralized governance employs its own system of checks and balances. Site-based management consists of local school councils (LSCs) that are comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders. LSCs determine what types of educational policies are made and how they get implemented. One site-based management example is the Chicago School Reform Act of 1998. This reform mandated the placement of the LSC within each district and the LSC was responsible for controlling the type of school organization and school operations (i.e., budgeting, curriculum, resources, etc.).

While the Chicago model has received mixed views, it nonetheless will provide the means to address the educational needs of this Midwestern

Public School District. Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1996) state the following about site-based management:

> As a form of governance, site-based management in and of itself will not generate improvements in school performance. Instead it is simply a means through which school-level decision makers can implement various reforms that can improve teaching and learning. (p. 4)

Provided that the influential networks of primary and secondary stakeholders are contacted and included within the educational policymaking process, establishing LSCs would address the undergirding complaints about public education and how schools are run and issues linked to resegregation vessels. The use of internal means to restructure education does not create competition between schools and students, although competition may surface between the constituents. Site-based managed schools would not require application processes that inherently lead to stratification. A federal system of checks and balances must monitor the relationship between constituents and thereby control any constituent competition that could potentially revert to stratified access that the mandate of *Brown v. Board of Education I* has outlawed.

The nexus between race and school choice remains equal educational opportunity despite the ideological and fundamental differences that emerge within the development and implementation of educational policies in this small city. The educational policy procedures of this Midwestern Elementary Magnet School are impacted by a "culture of power" that limits the level of access and opportunity for "outsiders" to participate in the policy developmental stages. No considerable efforts are taken to contact and thereby include influential, African American medians in these early stages of policy development. The nexus between race and school choice further reveals that the implications of equal educational opportunity under the guises of "less bureaucracy, school accountability, and more parental involvement" do not ensure that the academic and social interests of all children, particularly African Americans, will be accommodated. There is a general consensus that the policy process of Midwestern Elementary Magnet School has been fair and objective since the community and local businesses are involved, although they are primarily comprised of White establishments. No significant considerations regarding the implications of race and educational performance are given within this matter. It is imperative, therefore, to monitor the implementation processes of equal educational opportunity to assess whether or not the educational policies enact equitable practices for all children attending public schools.

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CHAPTER 22

A NEW MODEL FOR GOVERNANCE IN BIG CITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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American public education is in crisis. In spite of media reports to the contrary, the root of this crisis is not school violence, high teacher turnovers, or dropping graduation rates. Instead, the crisis plaguing public education in the latter half of the 20th century has been one of confidence or the lack thereof. In spite of the fact that more young people are matriculating to college, public schools continue to be characterized as poorly managed, inadequately staffed, and unable to prepare students for the future. Even though this crisis is a systemic issue, urban school systems receive the bulk of these negative critiques. To satisfy critics, urban public schools are forced to institute policy changes that are perceived to make them more accountable to various sectors of the public.

Surmounting All Odds, pages 547–560
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Business and industry ranks chief among the critics of urban public education. Since the end of World War II, industry has experienced its own crisis. The globalization of economies and marketplaces has created greater opportunities for worldwide competition. During the 1980s, many American businesses were forced to eliminate many high-paying and low-skills jobs that supported lower middle-class and working-class families. These actions were taken to permit them to remain competitive in the global economy. While increasing unemployment rates, this strategy also led to a decline in the standard of living in many industrialized nations. Although a number of factors contributed to this economic shift, industry chose to blame public education for America's failing ability to compete. Ignoring its own responsibility, industry argued that public education was destroying the nation by failing to train and prepare America's youth to execute high-order tasks and to occupy positions that are essential in the global economy (Berliner & Biddle, 1995).

While fears surrounding competition in a global community have not been entirely abated, they have given rise to increased interest in adapting public education to the business model. Industry argues that the problems of public education exist because of poor management. There are two major problems central to this criticism. First, business contends that public education fails to understand and utilize competition, which is an essential element in a market-driven economy. Second, public schools do not operate effectively because management fails to use business techniques (Birnbaum, 2000; Chubb & Moe, 1990; Lieberman, 1989).

Over the past 20 years, many critics have expressed concern about public education's inability to respond to market forces. Like many other governmental agencies, public education has been viewed as a monopoly. Because of this, critics suggest that public schools should utilize school choice, privatization, and other reform initiatives to make them more competitive and to offer parents increased opportunities to choose the schools their children will attend (Bush, 2001; Chubb & Moe, 1990; Flam & Keane, 1997; Lieberman, 1989). Although these strategies seem promising, Brown (1995) asserts that it is unlikely that these changes will help families with limited incomes. Many families in urban areas are unable to access or take advantage of reform programs due to limited transportation options, a shortage of economic resources, and a preoccupation with more pressing concerns. Although educating children is of great concern to parents, many urban families are not in a position to do very much about it.

In addition, some critics recommend that public education adopt business management techniques. Increasingly, these notions involve the use of private companies to operate public schools (Walsh, 1995). Arguing that school administrators have repeatedly failed to perform assigned responsibilities, some critics contend that more business-like managerial structures must be put in place in the public schools. Rather than resolve the problems of public education through internal solutions, many urban school districts have been forced to consider Educational Management Organizations (EMOs) such as the Edison Corporation, Inc. The use of EMOs creates an illusion that effective management and instruction strategies are being used in these districts (Flam & Keane, 1997). Indeed, the allure of reducing operating costs and improving academic achievement are most attractive to urban districts that are frequently viewed as low performing and poorly managed (Farrell, Johnson, Jones, & Sapp, 1994; Molnar, 1994; Walsh, 1995). Although interest remains high, EMOs should not be relied upon to reform public education. The primary reason why the business paradigm cannot be effectively applied to public education is that these entities do not subscribe to the same values. Public education operates for the public good and is designed to promote a variety of objectives, including the socialization of youth, the education of the electorate, and the preparation of the nation's future workforce. Businesses, on the other hand, exist to make profits for their shareholders. As such, private companies should not be entrusted with the responsibility of operating public education.

SCHOOL REFORM EFFORTS

Like many other industries, public schools are constantly searching for new solutions to enhance effectiveness. To this end, the current school reform movement has produced remedies that have been categorized as first-order and second-order changes (Cuban, 1988). First-order changes focus on defining how much students are required to learn. These strategies include increased high school graduation requirements, competency tests for students, and longer school days and years for public school students (Gross & Gross, 1985). The institution of first-order changes forced many states to substantially increase expenditures for public education. Odden and Picus (1992) reported that state expenditures for public education in the United States increased by 17-fold from 1957 to 1987.

Due to the failure of first-order changes to produce dramatic improvements in public education, the educational leadership began to advocate a new direction for public education (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Center for Policy Research Analysis, 1986). This led to the emergence of second-order changes. Unlike previous reforms, second-order changes center around restructuring management and delivery systems in public education. Moreover, these strategies are also more politically charged and do not demand large investments of economic resources. Shared decision making, school-based management, school privatization, vouchers, choice programs, and charter schools are examples of second-order changes.

Because many second-order changes tend to deemphasize financial inputs, this has created greater interest among cost-conscious groups. Second-order changes, such as school-based management, is viewed as the most popular with public school faculties. This is largely due to the higher degree of freedom that teachers enjoy under this system (Hunter & Swann, 1999). Parents, on the other hand, tend to favor vouchers, choice programs, and charter school systems. These structures provide a greater array of choices, as compared to the traditional system of public education. The conservative community has also embraced second-order changes. Vouchers, tuition and tax credit systems for private schools, and privatization are the mainstays of conservative thought on public school reform. They contend that these approaches align the public educational system more to the private one, which is susceptible to market forces (Chubb & Moe, 1990). However, Brown (1991) contends that nonprofit, private schools, like the public schools, are not driven by the for-profit culture that propels a free market economy. Most private schools have social, moral, religious, and educational missions that are not compatible with business paradigms. Although they have the right to charge tuition, private schools do not generally exist to make money. After all, most private schools are not-for-private organizations.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ANSWERABILITY

The school reform movement at the end of the 20th century has been dominated by strategies to make public schools more accountable. Although promoted by a variety of interests, state lawmakers increasingly have promoted accountability systems that require students to meet high academic standards, which can only be assessed by taking statewide criterion-referenced examinations. School reform is certainly not new. It has been going on since the early 1980s. However, the statewide accountability systems of the 1990s do represent a paradigm shift in the way educational quality is being assessed. Throughout much of the past, schools were assessed by input measures, such as budgets and per-pupil expenditures. Today, state accountability systems are based largely on the evaluation of output measures, such as student achievement on statewide accountability examinations. According to Jerald and Boser (1999), Nebraska and Iowa are the only states that do not use statewide tests to assess student performance on curriculum standards.

The increased importance and reliance on statewide tests to measure student performance has added another dimension to the school reform debate. Some maintain that high-stakes testing serves as a useful tool in evaluating public education. Indeed, President George W. Bush has made testing the centerpiece of his education plan, "No Child Left Behind," by recommending that students in third through eighth grades be tested annually (Olson, 2001). Similarly, the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic advocacy and education policy group, contends that high-stakes testing has actually benefited Hispanic students (Viadero, 2000).

Despite receiving strong political support, some researchers, educators, and parents argue that high-stakes testing has a detrimental impact on public education. During the 2000 American Education Research Association (AERA) Conference, some education researchers asserted that the increased emphasis on testing may be limiting school curricula and teacher creativity. Many teachers have also complained about the negative influence high-stakes testing is having on their positions. Complaints about statewide examinations include requiring students to spend too much time preparing to be tested, too many incidents of cheating by students and teachers, and requiring educators to reorganize the school curriculum to fit examinations. In addition to the problems cited by teachers, parents complained that children are receiving less education than before the adoption of this reform. To express their discontent, some parents have boycotted the use of the statewide tests by keeping their children home on exam days (Viadero, 2000). Furthermore, the use of high-stakes testing has also resulted in legal challenges in Arizona and Louisiana (Olson, 2000).

Even though statewide accountability systems and high-stakes testing have created some controversy, the school reform movement continues to reshape public schools. Today, most public schools are required to meet specific performance objectives and to ensure that students have met prescribed curriculum standards. Some states have provided incentives and disincentives to high and low performing schools and school districts. Incentives include monetary awards for teachers and other district personnel who work in schools that exceed performance standards. Disincentives or penalties are also provided for schools and school districts that fail to meet performance expectations, and the ultimate penalty for low performance is a school takeover by the state.

SCHOOL TAKEOVERS

Even though it seems to be a drastic step, school boards and politicians increasingly support school takeovers. For the most part, states have been more willing to take over low performing school districts, as opposed to low performing schools. There are approximately 23 school districts that authorized school takeovers for failing schools or districts. Many of these school districts are located in urban areas, including Baltimore, Cleveland, Harrisburg, Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

Modern school takeovers derive from school takeovers that were used to promote school desegregation. Fueled by cases in federal court, school desegregation efforts provided the perfect climate for governments to experiment with public school takeovers. Both the Boston and Cleveland Public Schools served as sites for this experimentation. In these cases, the judges were forced to take over these school systems because school boards and administrations refused to comply with the courts' orders to desegregate (Hunter & Swann, 1999).

Although the use of school takeovers is not new, they are now being used to give state and local politicians power to administer public schools (Green & Carl, 2000; Kirst & Bulkley, 2000). From a governmental standpoint, states are justified in exercising control over public education. This position is attributed to the United States Constitution, which obligates state governments to provide free public education to its citizens. At the same time, local taxpayers supply a significant portion of the operational funds for public schools. Because of this, taxpayers have a vested interest in public education.

School takeovers have also resulted from financial mismanagement in the states of New Jersey, Ohio, and California. In these cases, takeovers occurred because school boards and superintendents failed to perform their fiduciary responsibility. Although resources are scarce, state governments must continue to provide an education to their students, even when a local district runs out of money. A state government cannot escape its obligation to provide public education (Wirt & Kirst, 1989). For example, in the early 1990s, school districts in Compton and Richmond (California) and Paterson and Newark (New Jersey) were taken over by state governments because of financial shortfalls. These districts were placed in receivership by state governments and the power of local boards of education was curtailed. Furthermore, interim superintendents were appointed by the state departments of education to operate and manage these districts (Reinhard, 1998).

States have increasingly included school takeover measures as part of their accountability systems. School districts with low-performing schools have been defined as educationally bankrupt and now face the possibility of being taken over in much the same way as if they had run out of money. In these cases, state laws permit state governments to take over school districts, and some urban districts have actually been placed under the control of municipal governments. School districts in Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Harrisburg, and Washington, D.C., have begun to experiment with mayoral control, while other smaller cities continue to debate the issue (Green & Carl, 2000; Kirst & Bulkley, 2000; Sandham, 2001; Sikkenga, 2000).

Although putting school districts under the control of local governments takes some of the burden off of states, it also adds fuel to an already complex political environment. In the past, mayors avoided discussing problems in public education and lacked the ability to influence the impact on public education policy. In recent years, mayors have begun to denounce public education in their communities. This tactic has created a political win–win situation for them. This was particularly true in large, urban districts where big-city mayors have benefited from blaming poor school performance on the superintendent and boards of education, while not having any governmental responsibility to address the problem. The name-calling of public schools has helped mayors gain greater support from their local communities. At the same time, this maneuver also diverted public attention away from problems that were the responsibility of the mayor.

In addition to leading to increased scapegoating, the school takeover movement has also had a profound impact on the relationship between big-city mayors and superintendents. In more stable political times, urban superintendents functioned independently of mayoral control. However, the school takeover movement has made public education a larger political issue. As a result, urban mayors now exercise greater influence over how school districts are structured and operate. Yet while the authority of urban mayors has increased, superintendents' ability to officiate has been compromised and limited. Rather than answer to elected school boards and state officials, the school takeover movement has helped to make the superintendent a de facto employee of both the city and the mayor. As such, the superintendent is expected to support and promote the mayor's educational agenda. Failure to do so may lead to a schism between the two, which makes it very difficult for the superintendent to be effective.

LEGALITY AND VALIDITY OF SCHOOL TAKEOVERS

As previously mentioned, state governments are responsible for maintaining public education. This responsibility gives states the authority to make changes in the public educational system. Similarly, school takeovers by state governments are generally permissible under state laws. Even so, the legality of school takeovers continues to be questioned. For the most part, opponents argue that school takeovers and the legislation establishing them may violate the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was intended to prevent selected states from disenfranchising racial and ethnic minorities by keeping them from voting. Because this is a federal law, any state law that violates or infringes upon it would be unconstitutional according to Article VI, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives supremacy to the federal government. Since local school boards are elected and racial and ethnic minorities dominate most urban populations, takeover legislation that permits state or local government officials to disband these boards may violate the Voting Rights Act of 1965. To date, the U.S. Supreme Court has not specifically ruled on the overall legality of school takeovers. The Court did have an opportunity to hear arguments on this issue after the state of Texas took over the predominately Hispanic Wilmer-Huthchins School District and suspended its local board of education (Reinhard, 1998). In the case of *Texas vs. U.S.* (1998), the Court ruled that it could not make a determination since Texas brought the suit primarily to find out what sanctions might be imposed if the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was violated by school takeovers. Rather than resolve this issue, the Court merely put off making a decision.

Just as the legality of takeovers remains unresolved, so do questions surrounding the validity of such action. In addition to threatening the right of self-governance, Green and Carl (2000) also find takeovers to be problematic because the state standards that are used to identify poor performing schools often lack specificity, place too much emphasis on standardized testing, and fail to provide provisions for reestablishing local control. Not only is it unclear why some schools are too poor to run themselves and others are not, states still have not clarified what districts must do to regain self-control. Furthermore, reliance on standardized tests as the primary measure of student achievement also suggests that the assessment process in most states is overly simplistic and may be culturally biased. Moreover, Green and Carl also contend that school takeovers lead to a slippery slope of government intervention. If state and local governments can strip school districts of local board control, what is to stop them from going after other agencies that are labeled as failing? Although not as popular or widely supported as school takeovers, the 1980s takeover of the city of East St. Louis by the state of Illinois because of a financial scandal and corruption supports Green and Carl's assertion. The vagueness of the takeover movement suggests that schools and school districts may be just the beginning.

IMPACT OF RACE ON SCHOOL TAKEOVERS

Though sometimes ignored by both supporters and opponents, the role of race on school takeovers has not been overlooked. The legal wrangling found in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 has helped to bring race to the forefront of the school takeover issue. Since the beginning of the school takeover movement, many minority citizens, school district employees, and community action groups have cast takeovers as an attempt to subjugate the civil rights of urban residents who tend to be both financially and socially disadvantaged (Green & Carl, 2000). According to the article "Race and Takeovers" (1998), schools that have been taken over in Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Compton (CA), Hartford (CT), Jersey City (NJ), Paterson (NJ), Wilmer-Hutchins (TX), and Washington, D.C., all have populations that are predominantly minority.

Frequently charged with being racist, some proponents of school takeovers have begun to fight back. Instead of promoting racism, some White politicians argue that it would be more racist to allow students to continue to receive a substandard education from failing districts than to intervene (Green & Carl, 2000). At the same time, more Black politicians have embraced school takeovers as a positive solution. Mayors Michael White (Cleveland) and Dennis Archer (Detroit), along with Maryland delegate Howard Rawlings (who helped write the law giving the state greater control over the Baltimore Public Schools), have spoken out in support of school takeovers (Green & Carl, 2000). Although the support of Black politicians does not entirely remove the racial stigma from school takeovers, it has helped takeover supporters characterize their efforts as helping minority communities, thereby increasing their support from parents in the reconstituted districts.

DISESTABLISHMENT—ALTERNATIVE TO TAKEOVERS?

Complicated by their dependency on standardized testing, marred by racial issues, predicated on questionable political rights and authority, and under continuous legal scrutiny, school takeovers, at best, are difficult to support. If the Supreme Court is finally forced to resolve this issue, at least the legal question will be settled. However, as evidenced by the *Texas v. U.S.* (1998) decision, the nation's highest court is reluctant to get involved in this one. As a possible alternative, Saiger (1999) suggests that courts should consider disestablishment. Similar to school takeovers, disestablishment allows states to take the management and operating authority away from poorly performing school districts. However, disestablishment differs from takeovers in that it is based on clear, legislatively defined standards, creates incentives for educational improvement, helps superintendents avoid entanglements with mayors by being responsible directly to the state, does not require substantial budget increases, and allows courts to avoid getting directly involved in the day-to-day operations of school districts as they did in school desegregation cases. As described by Saiger, disestablishment encourages intergovernmental rather than market competition, which is more likely to lead to greater accountability, as well as preserve education as a public good.

In spite of these arguments, it is difficult to believe that disestablishment can or will end the school takeover controversy. Although the notion of lower costs and greater control will appeal to some states, Saiger's (1999) assessment of the legality of disestablishment may be misleading. In his legal analysis of disestablishment, he focuses exclusively on state laws. As such, Saiger neglects to consider the possible challenges that might be brought against school disestablishment based on the U.S. Constitution or other federal laws including the Voting Rights Act of 1965. By removing local elected boards, states might still face the possibility of being sanctioned by the federal courts. Furthermore, the fact that disestablishment eliminates market competition is likely to make it unappealing to many conservative school reformers who will not appreciate the fact that private companies are not given the opportunity to help improve failing school systems.

THE RESULTS OF SCHOOL TAKEOVERS

As discussed, school takeovers have made it increasingly difficult for school superintendents to effectively do their jobs, especially when schools are placed under local government control. Indeed, once the possibility of a district takeover arises, it creates greater tension between the urban superintendent and other officials including the state secretary of education, the governor, and the mayor, as well as local school boards themselves (Green & Carl, 2000; Hendrie, 1998; Kirst & Bulkley, 2000; Sandham, 2001; Sikkenga, 2000). Furthermore, the threat of school takeovers also makes it difficult for superintendents to work with subordinates who have more political incentives to side with the mayor. In essence, the increased influxes of politics into the day-to-day operations of public education make it difficult for superintendents to function effectively.

Due to limited empirical research, not much is known about the impact school takeovers have on schools, districts, faculty, staff, or students. To date, the research on school takeovers has produced both mixed and conflicting results. Since being placed under the control, students in both the Chicago Public Schools and the Baltimore Public Schools have made slight improvements on standardized tests. For example, approximately 8% more Chicago students tested above the national average in reading and math, three years after that district was taken over by the mayor. Similarly, students in Baltimore also showed modest performance improvements after the state of Maryland took over the city's schools (Green & Carl, 2000). Furthermore, it would be a stretch to attribute these modest increases solely to the school takeover, since one of the biggest changes made in both locales was budgetary (Education Commission of the States, 1997). There is no reason to believe these districts would not have made similar improvements had they received the same budget increases and continued to operate under the old management structures.

The student performance improvements made in Chicago and Baltimore should not be considered conclusive evidence of the success of school takeovers. Putting the school district in Jersey City, New Jersey, under the control of the mayor failed to produce changes in dropout rates, school violence, or student performance (Green & Carl, 2000). On the other hand, the threat of a possible school takeover has served as a catalyst for urban school improvement in Maryland, where many of the schools on the potential takeover list have made measurable progress (Argetsinger, 1999, cited in Green & Carl, 2000).

In addition to producing mixed results, school takeovers have also provided an additional avenue for EMOs seeking to set up contracts to run public schools. Despite the failure of Educational Alternatives, Inc. (EAI), Baltimore is once again allowing an EMO to run some of its schools. Since the failure of EAI, Edison Schools, Inc., has been managing some of the city's educationally bankrupt schools (Hettleman, 2000). While EAI was under contract to provide services to some of Baltimore's schools, the company repeatedly put its own profit interests above the needs of their students. In spite of numerous instances where EAI violated its contract, including demanding more money than what was agreed upon in the original contract, Baltimore did little to regulate it. Indeed, the city circumvented its own bidding process by permitting EAI to get the contract in the first place (Walsh, 1995). Yet, with all of its negative history, Baltimore is once again traveling what Molnar (1994) calls the "yellow-bricked road of privatization" in the hopes of realizing some measurable school improvements. Although somewhat unique, the situation in Baltimore suggests that for some, school takeovers are simply a shortcut to privatizing public education.

Returning to a question posed by Green and Carl (2000), what does a school or district have to do to have local board control restored? There is still no answer to this question. However, the Compton Unified School District, California's first district to be taken over for both financial and academic problems, may soon serve as a beacon for other reconstituted districts. For the better part of the last eight years, Compton has been under state control. During that time, the district has demonstrated improvements in student performance and made significant improvements to school buildings and campuses. In addition, the district is made the final payment on its multimillion-dollar loan from the state in July 2001. As a result, it has been predicted that Compton will once again operate under local control by the end of the year (Reid, 2001). Although local control has not yet been restored, Compton's schools still face harsh criticism from Mayor Omar Bradley. Despite the improvements the district has made, Bradley remains dissatisfied, charging both the old and the current leadership with racism (Reid, 2001). Using similar rhetoric, Bradley seems to be trying to create a situation that will allow him to follow in the footsteps of other African American mayors in Detroit and Cleveland and have direct control of the school district shifted to the city. The fact that Compton's schools were taken over by the state is not enough.

CONCLUSION

The takeover experience of the Compton Unified School District provides some interesting forecasts for the future of urban school districts. The fact that this district anticipates regaining local control later this year implies that school takeovers need not be permanent. In addition, the example found in Compton also suggests that academic improvements cannot be made without adequate financial resources. The management changes instituted by the state were not enough.

Furthermore, if the Compton situation is any indication, state-controlled school takeovers are not likely to satisfy many big-city politicians. Despite being taken over and fulfilling many of the requirements placed on it by the state, Mayor Omar Bradley remains dissatisfied with the way the Compton Unified School District is managed and operates. Although his reasoning is not entirely clear, Bradley's comments suggest that some big-city leaders will not be content until urban school districts are permanently placed under mayoral control. However, the idea that urban school systems would be improved by shifting control to city governments is inherently flawed because mayors will never experience the same pressure to improve school districts as superintendents. Mayors are politicians, they tend to rely on opinion polls and elections to gauge their success. As such, mayors need not improve failing school systems to get re-elected. Instead, they may simply choose to blame and remove the superintendent or the chief operating officer. Although this strategy succeeds in taking the heat off the mayor, it can be severely damaging to the school system, which is forced to regroup and change direction each time a new superintendent or CEO is installed. Since mayors will never be responsible for improving urban school districts, there is little to be gained from giving city governments the control of public education.

In addition to the continued interest of mayors in controlling public education, the circumstances in Compton also illustrate some of the drawbacks associated with using takeovers to reform schools. First, there is no way to manage public education that will satisfy all of its stakeholders. Elected school boards and big-city mayors both think they know what is best for public education. As long as one is in charge, the other will not be satisfied. Second, changing the management of a school district should not be expected to substitute for updating facilities, hiring more teachers, increasing access to technology, or supplying the books and other resources that these schools need to achieve lasting success. Although it is unlikely that budget increases will solve all of the problems plaguing urban school districts, it is unreasonable to expect them to achieve significant success without more resources. Finally, although school takeovers have the potential to resolve some of the management problems many urban school districts face, they cannot resolve the social, economic, and political issues that also have a profound effect on both the schools and their students. Mayors who are really interested in improving public education would do better by working to break the cycle of poverty that runs rampant through urban America. Giving parents greater opportunities to improve their social and economic situations will also lead to improvements in the domestic and academic lives of urban students.

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PART III

POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLING AND EDUCATION

CHAPTER 23

TWO STEPS FORWARD, THREE STEPS BACK

Campus Climate, Gender, and African American Representation in Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

It is well known in our society that the more education a person acquires, the more doors of opportunity will be opened. For those who earn degrees in higher education, academic attainment is associated with job security and economic stability, as well as better opportunities to improve socioeconomic status. Although the pathway to success in education is long and arduous, it still remains an important part of the "American dream."

Surmounting All Odds, pages 563–594
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For African Americans in particular, the pursuit of this "dream" has been a bittersweet struggle. Historically, leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Mary Church Terrell, and Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as the larger community, believed a college degree would not only enhance the social and economic outcomes of individuals, but would benefit Black people as a whole. The "dream" symbolized equal opportunity regardless of skin color and the chance to prove that Blacks were not intellectually inferior to Whites. Moreover, the racial stereotypes used to justify Black oppression would have been shown to lack validity. Unfortunately, structural and psychological barriers continue to impede Black academic attainment. Today as in the past, African Americans are denied full access to the American dream. Blacks have made enormous strides in socioeconomic status, both absolutely and relative to Whites. These gains were partly due to the tearing down of legal barriers in the 1960s and 1970s that prevented Blacks from fully participating in American social, political, and economic life, and to the institutionalization of strong anti-discrimination and affirmative action efforts in the 1970s (Jaynes, 1990). Despite gains in other areas of life, African Americans are persistently and sizably underrepresented in higher education. Although the most significant gains in educational attainment for Africa Americans followed the Civil Rights Movement, at each decade since this historical event, African American representation within higher education has not increased at a rate that is comparable to their Chicano/Latino, Asian, and White American counterparts (Wilds, 2000).

This chapter investigates factors that contribute to disparities in degree attainment for African American students in higher education. Previous research on gender and race differentials in academic attainment have emphasized the higher rates in which African American females are awarded bachelor degrees relative to Black males. Of particular interest here is to articulate what occurs during the college progression that may contribute to different rates of degree attainment. By examining student perceptions and experiences on campus, we capture how milieu directly affects educational attainment and success for this underrepresented group of students.

AFRICAN AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

African Americans have made significant gains in enrollment and degree attainment in higher education over the past 20 years. Table 23.1 shows in 1979, 8% of African Americans completed four years of college or more and in 2000 that number rose to 17%. Scholars attribute this growth in the number of African Americans enrolled in college to their shift to Predominantly White Institutions (PWI), financial assistance plans that made college more accessible, and numerous civil rights bills which helped to promote policies that assisted African American (and other underrepresented) students attend college (Cohen & Nee, 2000). Although the majority of Black students attended predominately White institutions (PWIs) since desegregation, a significant number of Black degrees were awarded by historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). It was not until the 1980s that the representation of African American females in higher education surpassed African American males and that trend continues today.

Table 23.1. Percent of People 25 Years Old and Over Who Have Completed 4 Years of College or More, by Race for 1979–2000

	Total			*White*			*African American*			*Hispanic*		
Year	*Both*	*M*	*F*	*Both*	*M*	*F*	*Both*	*M*	*F*	*Both*	*M*	*F*
2000	25.6	27.8	23.6	28.1	30.8	25.5	16.6	16.4	16.8	10.6	10.7	10.6
1999	25.2	27.5	23.1	27.7	30.6	25.0	15.5	14.3	16.5	10.9	10.7	11.0
1997	23.9	26.2	21.7	24.6	27.0	22.3	13.3	12.5	13.9	10.3	10.6	10.1
1995	23.0	26.0	20.2	24.0	27.2	21.0	13.2	13.6	12.9	9.3	10.1	8.4
1993	21.9	24.8	19.2	22.6	25.7	19.7	12.2	11.9	12.4	9.0	9.5	8.5
1991	21.4	24.3	18.8	22.2	25.4	19.3	11.5	11.4	11.6	9.7	10.0	9.4
1989	21.1	24.5	18.1	21.8	25.4	18.5	11.8	11.7	11.9	9.9	11.0	8.8
1987	19.9	23.6	16.5	20.5	24.5	16.9	10.7	11.0	10.4	8.6	9.7	7.5
1985	19.4	23.1	16.0	20.0	24.0	16.3	11.1	11.2	11.0	8.5	9.7	7.3
1983	18.8	23.0	15.1	19.5	24.0	15.4	9.5	10.0	9.2	7.9	9.2	6.8
1981	17.1	21.1	13.4	17.8	22.2	13.8	8.2	8.2	8.2	7.7	9.7	5.9
1979	16.4	20.4	12.9	17.2	21.4	13.3	7.9	8.3	75	6.7	8.2	5.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

Scholars have attempted to explain why African American females enroll and graduate from college at higher rates than African American males. If we take into account graduation rates from high schools, we find that Black males and females graduate at comparable rates with a slight advantage by females (Table 23.2). It is not until entrance into college that we find African American females outnumber African American males. Some factors that contribute to disparities in enrollment for men are: how much they value education; entrance into attractive jobs that do not require a college degree; rates in which they enter the military; and, incarceration rates that affect access to education. On the opposite end, incentives for women to pursue higher education are: the ideology of individual opportunity (Jacobs, 1996); fewer career/employment alternatives; realization they are more financially stable with a college degree; and, job security.

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Table 23.2. Percent of People 25 Years Old and Over Who Have Completed 4 Years of High School or More, by Race for 1979–2000

	Total			*White*			*African American*			*Hispanic*		
Year	*Both*	*M*	*F*	*Both*	*M*	*F*	*Both*	*M*	*F*	*Both*	*M*	*F*
2000	84.1	84.2	84.0	88.4	88.5	88.4	78.9	79.1	78.7	57.0	56.6	57.5
1999	83.4	83.4	83.4	87.7	87.7	87.7	77.4	77.2	77.5	56.1	56.0	56.3
1997	82.1	82.0	82.2	83.0	82.9	83.2	74.9	73.5	76.0	54.7	54.9	54.6
1995	81.7	81.7	81.6	83.0	83.0	83.0	73.8	73.4	74.1	53.4	52.9	53.8
1993	80.2	80.5	80.0	81.5	81.8	81.3	70.4	69.6	71.1	53.1	52.9	53.2
1991	78.4	78.5	78.3	79.9	79.8	79.9	66.7	66.7	66.7	51.3	51.4	51.2
1989	76.9	77.2	76.6	78.4	78.6	78.2	64.6	64.2	65.0	50.9	51.0	50.7
1987	75.6	76.0	75.3	77.0	77.3	76.7	63.4	63.0	63.7	50.9	51.8	50.0
1985	73.9	74.4	73.5	75.5	76.0	75.1	59.8	58.4	60.8	47.9	48.5	47.4
1983	72.1	72.7	71.5	73.8	74.4	73.3	56.8	56.5	57.1	46.2	48.6	44.2
1981	69.7	70.3	69.1	71.6	72.1	71.2	52.9	53.2	52.6	44.5	45.5	43.6
1979	67.7	68.4	67.1	69.7	70.3	69.2	49.4	49.2	49.5	42.0	42.3	41.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

This leads us to the present-day problem of the declining representation and degree attainment for African Americans in higher education. Figure 23.1 highlights percentages of bachelor degrees awarded by race for selected years beginning with 1979 and ending with 1997. Although White students continue to receive an overwhelming majority of bachelor degrees, relative to their representation in higher education, degree attainment for all racial minorities has increased. In comparison to the other four major groups (Asian, Mexican, Native Americans, and White Americans), African American degree attainment is the lowest. In particular, undergraduate enrollment for African Americans since 1993 has increased 8.3%, which is less than half the rates of increase for Hispanics, Asian Americans, and American Indians during the same period (Wilds, 2000).

In comparison to their White counterparts, disparities in Black college enrollment are more pervasive. Most recent data shows that African Americans comprise less than 12% of total undergraduate enrollment, whereas Whites make up 71% of the student population. Moreover, African Americans received only 8.1% of bachelor degrees awarded in 1997, though they represented more than 11.2% of all undergraduate students (Wilds, 2000). Whites were awarded 77% of undergraduate degrees and were 71% of all undergraduate enrollments. The relatively low enrollment and degree attainment patterns for African American students have caused concern over what circumstances contribute to this decline.

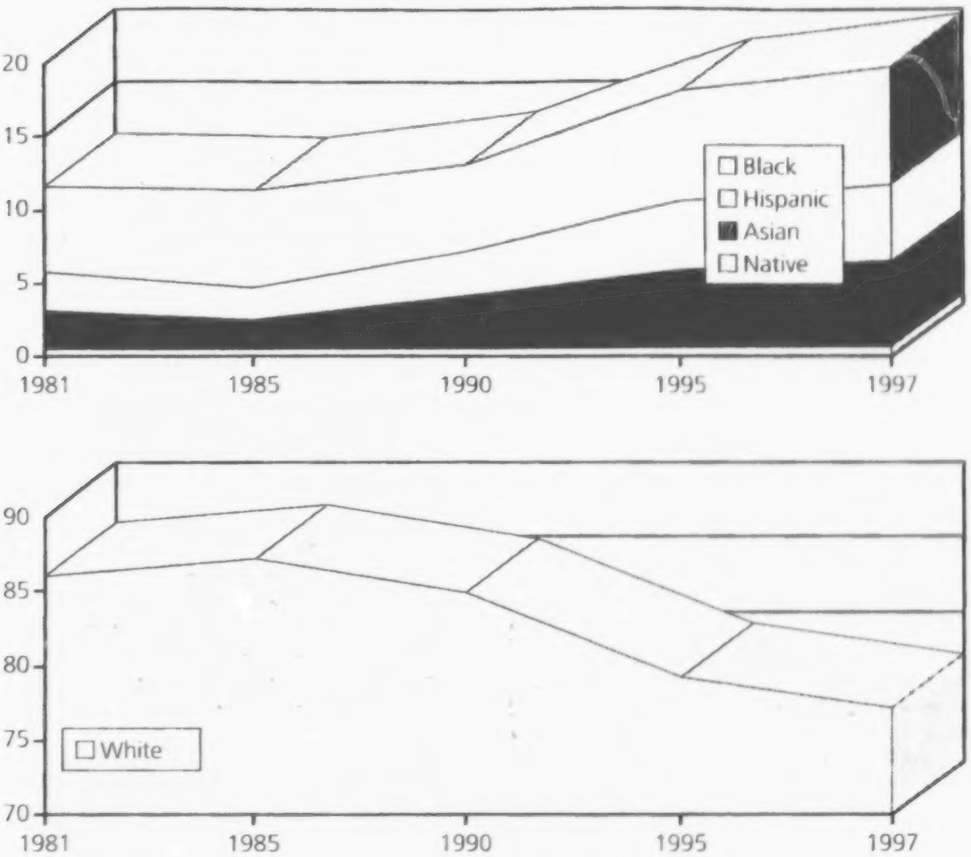

Figure 23.1. Percentage of Bachelor degrees by race for selected years.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Digest of Education Statistics.* Washington, DC. 1994, 1999.

Although African American students enter the university with proven scholastic competency demonstrated by exceptional high school grades and scholastic aptitude test (SAT) scores, African Americans underachieve even when they have ample resources, strongly value education, and are well prepared in terms of knowledge and skills (Allen, 1992; Steele, 1992). In fact, once these students are in the educational system, their grades average half a letter below their White classmates (Steele, 1992). Taking these conditions into account, it is imperative to ask which factors may be stagnating academic growth and achievement for African American students in higher education, particularly at PWIs.

The debate over which type of institution best prepares Black students for success in higher education places the HBCUs at the forefront. Relative to their numbers among all colleges, HBCUs continue to disproportionately produce African American college graduates (Allen, 1992; Nettles & Perna, 1997). Moreover, students who attend an HBCU report better psychosocial adjustment, greater satisfaction with campus climate, more positive interaction with faculty, and better preparation for entrance into the labor force (Allen, 1992). For Black males in particular, attending an HBCU is an advantage since they seem to perceive and utilize resources more effectively on Black majority campuses (Fleming, 1984). For African American females, research has shown that academic success and psychological development can be threatened in both Black majority and Black minority settings. For example, sexism and tokenism in HBCU settings and the "double-bind" of facing racism and sexism at PWIs have been shown to limit the academic achievement and normal psychological development of African American females during college (Fleming, 1984). Although this can adversely affect academic progression for African American females, Black males and females earn bachelor degrees at comparable rates at HBCUs (Wilds, 2000). Consequently, these institutions continue to attract the best and brightest Black students in the country. Data shows that enrollments in HBCUs grew steadily between 1976 and 1994, increasing overall by 23% between 1984 and 1994 (Wilds, 2000). The decline in the proportion of African Americans attending and graduating from HBCUs in recent years is due to the overall increase of African Americans in higher education rather than to a decline in enrollment at HBCUs (Nettles & Perna, 1994).

Figure 23.2 highlights the percentage of bachelor degrees awarded to African Americans for selected years at both PWIs and HBCUs. Considering all bachelor degrees awarded, Black males continue to trail Black females and males in other ethnic groups since 1980. In 1995, the college graduation rate for African American women was 43% compared to 35% for African American males (Carter & Wilson, 1996). Data shows since 1981 and 1985, Black women were awarded 60% of bachelor degrees compared to 40% for males at PWIs (18% of those degrees were earned at an HBCU); in 1990, Black women earned 62% of bachelor degrees compared to 38% for males at PWIs (27% were earned at HBCUs); in 1995, 64% of women earned bachelor degrees versus 36% of males (28% were awarded at HBCUs); and in 1997, 64% of Black bachelor degrees were awarded to women compared to 36% for Black males at PWIs (27% of those degrees were awarded at HBCUs). Taken together, since 1980, the gender gap in degree attainment for Black females and males has continuously increased, particularly in the 1990s when males were earning bachelor degrees at half the rate of their female counterparts.

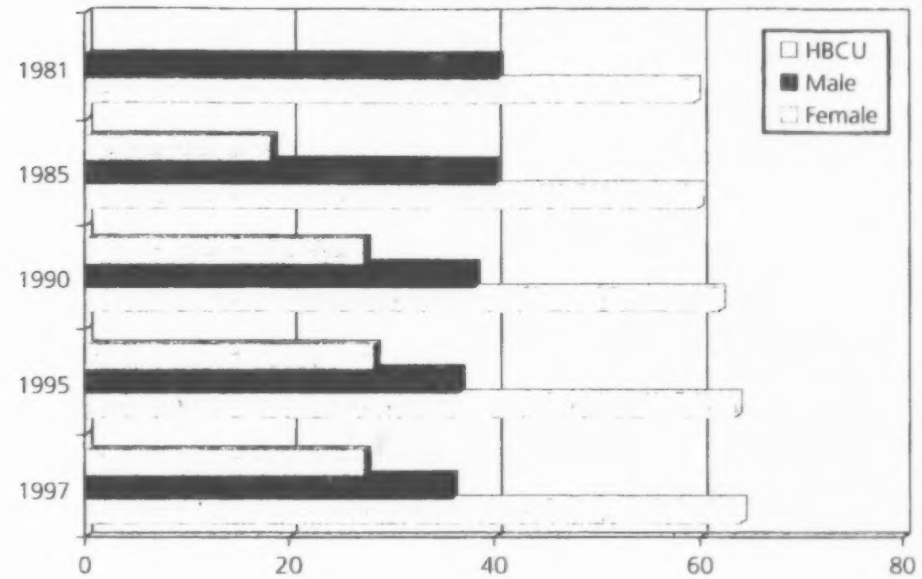

Figure 23.2. Percentage of Bachelor degrees for African Americans for selected years. *Source:* U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Digest of Education Statistics.* Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994, 1996, 2000.

* Data was not available for degree attainment at HBCUs for 1981 or by gender for select years.

ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT

Various factors contribute to the observed low degree attainment for African Americans in higher education. Socioeconomic disadvantage, discrimination, racial gaps in achievement, "lack of fit," and poor psychosocial adjustment are among the factors that affect educational attainment for Black females and males (Allen, 1992; Fleming, 1984). Also, psychological and cultural variables that directly affect African American college students' experiences and development can impede their academic progress. Previous research (Cross, 1995; Parham, 1989; Phinney & Alpuria, 1992; Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 1995; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997; Speight, Vera, & Derrickson, 1996; Steele, 1992) has shown that students' intellectual development is associated with self-esteem, positive self-concept, psychosocial competence, and identity development. In particular, research focused on racial identity and student outcomes has found strong associations between the degree of race saliency and high educational aspirations (Sellers et al., 1997). Academic outcomes are also related to racial identity and race-related social experiences (Chetham, Slaney, & Coleman, 1990), as well as psychological well-being and social development (Parham & Helms, 1985). Most recent research on the dynamics of campus milieu and its institutional context has demonstrated that campus climate is a central determinant of college access and achievement for underrepresented students (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998). Moreover, Hurtado and colleagues (1998) have shown how the behavioral and psychological dimensions of institutional climate play central roles in fostering successful academic outcomes for students of color. The behavioral dimension of the institutional climate consists of (a) actual reports of general social interaction, (b) interaction between and among individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, and (c) the nature of inter-group relations on campus (Hurtado et al., 1998). The psychological dimension involves individuals' views of group relations, institutional responses to diversity, perceptions of discrimination or racial conflict, and attitudes toward those from other racial/ethnic backgrounds other than one's own (Hurtado et al., 1998). Taken together, these two dimensions play significant roles and provide insight into what influences academic attainment for students of color.

PROBLEM, DATA, AND METHODS OF STUDY

The objective of this chapter is to articulate differences and similarities in experiences for male and female students in two different campus contexts. Using four distinct data sets, which assess various aspects of educational experiences and outcomes for African American students in each decade since the 1980s, this chapter extends previous research by examining campus context at strategic points in time. Moreover, analysis of gender equity at HBCUs and PWIs should show which factors contribute to successful academic achievement for Black students in higher education. We also examine how campus climate affects educational outcomes and how campus climate shapes perceptions for African American students. The following are our guiding research questions:

- We posit that Black males are at an advantage at HBCUs and will exhibit higher levels of engagement and positive outcomes compared to their female counterparts at HBCUs. We believe that Black females will also engage at HBCUs and have higher levels of college satisfaction. Moreover, we believe males will assert themselves at higher levels than females.
- We posit both Black males and Black females at PWIs will more likely disengage and express negative outcomes compared to their White, Asian, and Chicano/Latino counterparts, with negative consequences for their degree progress and academic achievement. Also,

we believe African American females will fare better academically at a PWI and have more positive outcomes compared to Black males.

- We posit perceptions of campus milieu and experiences of Black males and Black females at PWIs will improve over the time periods studied.

Four primary datasets are used to assess the experiences and achievement of Black undergraduate students attending both predominantly White and historically Black universities. The first dataset is from the National Study of Black College Students (NSBCS), a national survey conducted in the early 1980s to examine key predictors of college outcomes among 2,521 Black students from two different college milieus. What makes this dataset unique is that it was collected over a three-year period from eight HBCUs (North Carolina Central University, Durham; Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA; Texas Southern University, Houston; Jackson State University, Jackson, MS; North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro; Central State University, Wilberforce, OH; Morgan State University Baltimore, MD; and Florida A&M University, Tallahassee) and eight PWIs (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; University of California, Los Angeles; Arizona State University, Tempe; Memphis State University; the State University of New York, Stony Brook; Eastern Michigan University; and University of Wisconsin, Madison).

The second dataset, referred to as the Midwest Study (MS), was collected in the early 1990s from six institutions of higher education in the upper midwestern region of the United States. Universities included three private (Oberlin College, Lewis University, and Northwestern University) and three public (Eastern Michigan University, Cleveland State University, and Southern Illinois University). This research focused on campus racial climate and students' experiences and achievement outcomes. The responses of 912 Black students were selected from the larger dataset containing survey responses from students, faculty and administrators for inclusion in the chapter.

The third dataset, referred to as the University of Michigan Law Case (UMLC), was a multimethod study conducted in 1999 that assessed campus racial climate and experiences for students of color at four PWIs: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Michigan State University, Harvard University, and the University of California, Berkeley. The responses of 95 Black undergraduate students were analyzed for inclusion in this chapter. Lastly, we use qualitative data collected from undergraduate students attending the following universities: University of California, Los Angeles (1982, 1999), University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (1982), State University of New York, Stony Brook (1982), Arizona State University (1982), and Memphis State University (1982). Students were asked to respond to open-ended questions, which captured their perceptions about their racial identity, peer relationships, experiences with faculty at the university, and experiences in a classroom setting.

The analysis begins with descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations and then moves to multivariate analysis. Four subcategories of explanatory variables are studied: demographics (gender, year in school, family education, high school class rank), campus racial climate (relations with faculty, fairness in grading, relations with White and Black students, unity, gender relations), psychosocial adjustment (self-confidence, need for a Black political party, acceptability of interracial dating and marriage, degree of racial separation/discrimination on campus, student problems, the attitude that Whites keep Blacks down), and outcomes (highest degree aspirations, consideration of leaving the university, felt part of campus life, certainty of college degree, and their university grade point average). Variable descriptions are located in Figure 23.3. Regression analyses were conducted to measure the relative importance of multiple explanatory variables in predicting university grade point average and whether students considered leaving the university during their college career.

RESULTS

Results of descriptive statistics are articulated in the text and tables for regression analysis are located in the Appendix. In this section, only significant findings for each dataset will be highlighted and discussed.

Background

Most students from the NSBCS-HBCU dataset indicated that they were ranked in the upper 50% of their senior year high school class, closely followed by 21% who reported being in the upper 30% and 20%, respectively. Twenty eight percent of males were in the upper half of graduating seniors in their high schools and 23% of female respondents were in the upper 20%. Twenty-seven percent of students from the NSBCS-PWI dataset indicated they were in the upper 10% and 23% were in the upper 20% class rank in their senior year of high school. For African American males and females, the majority, 25% and 30% respectively, were in the upper 10% rank at their high school. In the Midwest study, the majority of students, 23%, were in the upper 20% of their high school graduating class, 23% of males and 25% of females, respectively.

Subcategory *Variable*	*Description*
Demographics	
Gender	Sex of respondent (Range: 1 = Female, 2 = Male)
Year	Current level of study at undergraduate institution (Range: 1 = Freshman, 2 = Sophomore, 3 = Junior, 4 = Senior, 5 = Other (Specify)
Family education	A measure of highest degree obtained by father, mother, and oldest sibling. (Range: 1 = 1–8 years, 2 = 9–11 years, 3 = High school graduate, 4 = Bachelor's degree, 5 = Master's degree, 6 = Professional degree (MD, JD), 7 = PhD)
Class rank (NSBCS, Midwest)	High school class rank (Range: 1 = Upper 5%, 2 = Upper 10%, 3 = Upper 20%, 4 = Upper 30%, 5 = Upper 50%, 6 = Lower 50%)
Campus Climate	
Relations with faculty	*Respondents were asked to rate their relationships with faculty at respective universities* (Range: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Above average, 3 = Average, 2 = Poor, 1 = Very poor)
Faculty grade fairly	Evaluation of faculty's ability to assess progress of students' academic achievement compared to peers (Range: 1 = More with Blacks, 2 = Same with all students, 3 = Less with Blacks, 4 = Seldom or never with any students)
Relations with Whites	Assessment of relationships and interaction with White students at respective institutions (Range: 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Poor, 4 = Very poor, 5 = No contact)
Relations with Blacks (Chicano/Latinos, Asians included in UMLC dataset)	Assessment of relationships and interaction with Black students at respective institutions (Range: 1 = Excellent, 2 = Good, 3 = Poor, 4 = Very poor, 5 = No contact)

Figure 23.3. Description of variables used from NSBCS, Midwest, and UMLC datasets

Subcategory *Variable*	*Description*
Unity	Indicate if there was a great deal of unity among Blacks on their campuses (Range: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly disagree)
Relations between men and women on campus (NSBCU dataset)	Assessment of degree to which Black men and women got along on campus (Range: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly disagree)
Psychosocial Adjustment	
Self-confidence	Asked respondents to rate their self-confidence compared to most other students at their universities (Range: 1 = highest, 2 = above average, 3 = about average, 4 = below average)
Black political party	Asked respondents if they felt there is a need for a national Black political party (Range: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree)
Interracial dating	Asked respondents if interracial dating and marriage were equally acceptable as dating and marrying a person of their own race (Range: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree)
Share same problems	Asked if respondent believed Black and White students shared the same problems (Range: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly disagree)
Racial discrimination	Asked respondents if they felt discriminated against by students on campus whose race was different from their own (Range: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)
Keeping Blacks down (UMLC dataset)	Respond to the statement "Whites are trying to keep non-Whites down (Range: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree)

Subcategory *Variable*	*Description*
Friends on campus (UMLC)	Indicate characteristics of friends on campus (Range: 1 = All or nearly all White, 2 = Mostly White, 3 = Half White/half people of color, 4 = Mostly people of color, 5 = All people of color
Outcomes	
Degree aspirations	Asked the highest academic degree students planned to obtain (Range: 1 = BA or BS degree, 2 = MA or MS degree, 3 = MSW, MPH, or MBA; 4 = MD, DDS or JD degree; 5 = PhD or EdD degree: 6 = Other–specify)
Considered leaving	Asked respondents if ever seriously considered leaving this university (Range: 1 = Yes, 2 = No)
Part of campus life	Asked respondents if they felt part of campus life, as far as activities and government were concerned. (Range: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree)
UGPA	Asked which best described their university grade point average (Range: 1 = A+ or A, 2 = A− or B+, 3 = B or B−, 4 = C+or C, 5 = C− or D+, 6 = D or less)
Certainty of degree (UMLC dataset)	Asked respondents if they were certain about obtaining a college degree (Range: 1 = Completely certain at this institution, 2 = Completely certain, not necessarily at this institution, 3 = Not completely certain)
Degree Importance	Indicate how important it is for you to get a degree from college (Range: 1 = Extremely important, 2 = Very important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Not at all important)

Figure 23.3. Description of variables used from NSBCS, Midwest, and UMLC datasets (Cont.)

Campus Climate

Nearly half of Black males that attended an HBCU (NSBCS) believed their professor's evaluations of them were above average compared to 44% of females, who believed they received an average evaluation. For Black students who attended a PWI (NSBCS), 35% of males and females thought White professors sometimes evaluated students fairly compared to 29% of males who believed they often graded fairly and 29% of females believed they seldom graded fairly. For students in the Midwest study, 78% of males and 70% of females believed that faculty graded fairly the same with all students, whereas 21% of males and 28% of females believed faculty graded less fairly with Black students. Lastly, the majority of students from the UMLC dataset, 39%, agreed faculty sometimes graded them unfairly. In particular, 47% of males and 36% of females agreed faculty sometimes graded them unfairly.

At an HBCU (NSBCS), nearly half of respondents agreed there was a great deal of unity among African Americans and that Black men and women got along on their campuses. Specifically, 50% of men and 49% of women agreed there was a great deal of unity and 57% of males and 57% of females agreed the two genders got along on campus. For students who attended a PWI (NSBCS), 55% of students agreed Black men and women got along on their campuses, where slightly over half of males and females reported good relations with each other on campus. Students from the Midwest study also rated their relations with other Black students on campus. Surprisingly, 54% of Black students indicated they had very poor relations with other Black students, and 78% of men and 84% of females reported very poor relations.

In regard to relations with peers on campus, over half of Black students at a PWI (NSBCS) reported good relations with White students, where 57% of Black males and 62% of Black females indicated they had good relations. The majority of African American students in the Midwest study, 63%, reported very poor relations with White students and 61% had very poor relations with White faculty as well. In general, 66% of males and 70% of females reported very poor relations with White faculty.

For students in the UMLC, 45% of African American students reported satisfactory relations with White students, 42% reported good relations with Latino students, and 38% reported satisfactory relations with Asian American students. In particular, the majority of Black males, 42%, reported satisfactory relations with White students, 42% reported good relations with Latino students, 27% reported good as well as satisfactory relations with Asian students, and over half reported excellent relations with other African American students. For Black women, 49% reported satisfactory relations with White students, 44% indicated they had good relations with Latino students, 44% reported satisfactory relations with Asian students, and 54% reported good relations with other Black students.

In further assessing campus climate, half of respondents in the UMLC dataset indicated there was some degree of racial conflict at their university. In particular, 36% of males and 60% of females believed there was some degree of racial conflict at their respective campuses. For students who attended a PWI (NSBCS), a majority 62% indicated they had encountered racial discrimination on their respective campus compared to 37% who had not. Specifically, 67% of males and 60% of females had encountered racial discrimination compared to 33% of males and 40% of females who had not.

Psychosocial Adjustment

For students who attended an HBCU (NSBCS), 43% of males rated their self-confidence as high, whereas 35% of females reported average self-confidence. African American students who attended a PWI (NSBCS) had less favorable outcomes. For Black males and females, 39% and 37%, respectively, reported above average levels of self-confidence. Responses from students in the Midwest dataset mirrored those of students in the NSBCS who attended a PWI. In particular, 38% of male respondents reported average levels of self-confidence, whereas 35% of females expressed above average levels of self-confidence.

In regard to aspects of racial identity, 40% of respondents who attended an HBCU (NSBCS) strongly agreed that there is a need for a national Black political party. Equal numbers of Black males and Black females were likely to strongly agree with the need for a national Black political party. For students who attended a PWI (NSBCS), 42% of respondents agreed there is a need for a national Black political party. In particular, 42% of males and 44% of females agreed there is a need for a Black political party. The majority of students from the Midwest study, 37%, agreed there is a need for a national Black political party. Furthermore, 38% of Black males disagreed compared to 42% of Black women who agreed to a need for a national Black political party.

Another indicator of racial identity is the degree to which students interact with peers from different racial groups. For students in the UMLC, 68% of males and 64% of females had friends on campuses who were mostly people of color. In general, 59% of Black males and 52% of females agreed that Whites are trying to keep non-Whites down.

Outcomes

Those students who attended an HBCU evidenced more positive outcomes. For Black men in particular, 39% expected to obtain an MA or MS degree and 40% of Black women had similar aspirations. For African American students who attended a PWI (NSBCS), the majority of African American males, 31%, planned to pursue a bachelor's or a master's degree. For African American females, the majority, 34%, intended to pursue a bachelor's degree. For students in the Midwest study, 33% of males and 32 % of females indicated they wanted to pursue a master's degree, closely followed by 22% of males who only wanted a bachelor's degree and 22 % of females who wanted a PhD or EdD. Lastly, 27% of male students in the UMLC dataset wanted to pursue an MA/MS or a PhD/EdD degree, whereas 33% of female respondents had aspirations of obtaining a PhD or EdD.

In evaluating university grade point average, 41% of Black males and 45% of Black females who attended an HBCU (NSBCS) fell in the C+ to C- grade range. For students at a PWI (NSBCS) 58% of males and females had grade point averages between a C+ and C–. Moreover, of students in the Midwest study, 30% of males and 34% of females had grade point averages that were between a C+ and C–. Black students in the UMLC expressed unusually high grade point averages. For Black males, the majority, 47%, had an A- to B+ average and 45% of Black females had an A- to B+ average.

Evaluating overall student satisfaction at the university, over half (59%) of Black students at an HBCU had never considered leaving the university compared to 39% who considered transferring. Specifically, 61% of males and 60% of females never considered leaving the university compared to 39% of males and 40% of females who considered leaving. Similarly, the majority of Black students who attended a PWI (NSBCS) had not considered leaving the university they currently attended, whereas 41% had thought about leaving. In particular, 63% of males and 57% of females had never considered leaving compared to 37% of males and 43% of females who had. Of students from the Midwest study, 38% of males and 34% of females sometimes considered leaving their university compared to 24% of males and 28% of females who never considered leaving. Surprisingly, the majority of Black males in UMLC, 36%, had never seriously considered leaving the university, whereas 34% of females hardly ever considered leaving.

The last indicator of successful outcomes deals with the extent to which students are engaged in campus life. As expected, 40% of respondents at an HBCU (NSBCS) felt a part of campus life because extracurricular activities at their respective universities somewhat (42%) reflected their interests. Conversely, 38% of respondents at a PWI (NSBCS) indicated they took very little part in campus life because extracurricular activities somewhat reflected their interests. Specifically, 37% of males and 39% of females indicated they took very little part in campus life because activities somewhat reflected their interests. For students in the Midwest dataset, the majority of males, 27%, disagreed to feeling a part of campus life, whereas 29% of females neither agreed nor disagreed.

In summary, descriptive statistics indicated that Black males from HBCUs expressed more favorable outcomes and campus satisfaction compared to Black females at both an HBCU and PWI. Black males received more favorable evaluations from faculty, had higher self-confidence and esteem as well as indicated being generally satisfied with their experiences at their respective HBCUs. What is most striking about both males and females who attended a PWI is the dissatisfaction with their experiences in its entirety. Of particular interest are the students in the Midwest Study who expressed least favorable encounters with faculty and peers, lower levels of self-confidence, and were the most at risk of leaving the university.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

NSBCS HBCU

The presentation of regression results in Table 23.3 highlights relationships between selected explanatory variables and students' university grade point average. Findings indicated females had higher grade point averages than males ($\beta = -.069^*$). Furthermore, students who were more engaged in campus life had higher university grade point averages ($\beta = .072^*$). University grade point averages were also higher for students with more self-confidence ($\beta = .072^*$) and higher educational aspirations ($\beta = .108^{**}$). For females in particular, the more they believed Black and White students share the same problems, the lower their grade point averages ($\beta = -.098^*$). Black males with higher educational aspirations had higher university grade point averages ($\beta = .130^*$). Overall, these variables accounted for 4% of the variance in UGPA ($R^2 = .043$). In general, the variables account for more variance among Black males ($R^2 = .050$ versus .041).

Regression results in Table 23.4 reports multiple correlations between explanatory variables and whether students considered leaving their respective universities. Results showed that students who were more engaged in campus life were less likely to consider leaving their university ($\beta = -.150^{***}$). For females in particular, students who are more engaged in campus life were less likely to consider leaving ($\beta = -.167^{***}$). Black males who are involved in campus life were also less likely to consider leaving school ($\beta = -.136^*$). Lastly, Black males who believed Black and White

Table 23.3. Linear Regression Models to Predict University Grade Point Average (HBCU-NSBCS)

Variable	Total			Female			Male		
	B	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β
Constant	22.065	.733	–.069*	21.421	.962		21.888	.979	
Gender	–.124	.064	–.069*						
Considered leaving	–.5554	.065	–.031	.0299	.091	.016	–.140	.091	–.086
Part of campus life	.06924	.035	.072*	.08331	.050	.082	.06097	.049	.070
Relations with White faculty	.03114	.034	.033	.04384	.048	.044	.02235	.047	.000
Self-confidence	.07213	.037	.072*	.08896	.051	.086	.051322	.054	.053
Need for Black political party	–.06227	.039	–.056	–.07401	.058	–.060	–.04131	.052	–.044
Interracial dating	–.02693	.036	–.026	.006882	.053	.006	–.06605	.049	–.074
Share same problems	–.04797	.037	–.046	–.109	.052	–.098*	.02928	.053	.031
How far in school	.08071	.026	.108**	.06765	.037	.086	.08872	.037	.130
R		.206			.203			.224	
R Square		.043			.041			.050	
N		791			454			336	

Source: HBCU-NSBCS African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table 23.4. Linear Regression Models to Predict Considered Leaving Campus (HBCU-NSBCS)

Variable	*Total*			*Female*			*Male*		
	B	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β
Constant	4.545	.573		3.734	.707		5.517	.888	
Gender	–.004968	.036	–.005						
Part of campus life	–.07979	.019	–.150***	–.08877	.026	–.167***	–.07169	.029	–.136*
Relations with White faculty	–.03559	.019	–.068	–.03278	.025	–.063	–.03184	.028	–.061
Self-confidence	.01492	.020	.027	–.01290	.026	–.024	.05225	.032	.088
.leed for Black political party	–.03400	.022	–.055	–.02159	.030	–.033	–.04976	.031	–.086
Interracial dating	.03837	.020	.068	.02581	.028	.044	.04786	.029	.088
Share same problems	–.03610	.021	–.062	.005701	.027	.010	–.08614	.032	–.148**
How far in school	–.005938	.015	–.014	.009695	.019	.024	–.02384	.023	–.057
Grade point average	–.01699	.020	–.031	.008157	.025	.016			
R		.201			.195			.271	
R Square		.041			.038			.074	
N		791			454			336	

Source: HBCU-NSBCS African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

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students share the same problems were less likely to consider leaving the university (β = –.148**).

NSBCS PWI

Table 23.5 presents regression analysis for explanatory variables to investigate their relationship with university grade point average. Of the entire sample, the more likely students were to consider leaving the university, the lower their grade point average (β = –.132***) For females in particular, the more likely they considered leaving the university, the less likely they reported high grade point averages (β =–.143***) and for males, the more they considered leaving the university, the less likely they reported high grades (β = –. 120**).

We also found that the more positive relationships between Black students and White faculty, the higher their grade point average (β = .080**). Specifically for females, the more positive relationships with White faculty, the higher their grade point average (β = .071*) and for Black males, the more positive relations with White faculty, the higher their university GPAs (β = .093*). Students with higher degrees of self-confidence were more likely to report higher grades (β = .093***). In particular for females, the higher their self-confidence level, the more likely they reported higher grades (β = .068*), and for males, the higher their self-confidence, the more likely they reported higher grades (β = .142**).

Table 23.6 presents regressions for selected variables on whether students considered leaving their universities. In general, the more engaged students were in campus life, the less likely they considered leaving the university (β = –.121***). For Black females in particular, the more engaged in campus life, the less likely they considered leaving (β = –.095**), and for males, the more engaged they were in campus life, the less likely they considered leaving the university (β = –.180***). We also found the more positive relations with White faculty, the less likely students considered leaving the university (β = –.063*). This was specifically salient for females, in that the more positive relations reported with White faculty, the less likely they considered leaving (β = –.075*). Moreover, we found the higher students' self-confidence, the less likely they considered leaving the university (β = –.149***). For Black females in particular, the higher their self-confidence, the less they considered leaving (β = - .177***), and for males, the higher their self-confidence, the less likely they considered leaving (β = –.099*). Moreover, those that felt there was a need for a Black political party were more likely to consider leaving the university (β = .123***). For females, the more positive beliefs in the need for a national Black political party, the more likely they considered leaving (β = .188***), and for males, the more they believed in the need for a national

Table 23.5. Linear Regression Models to Predict Grade Point Average (NSBCS-PWI)

Variable	Total			Female			Male		
	B	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*
Constant	20.722	.742		20.322	.886		21.825	1.132	
Gender	.06348	.065	.027						
Considered leaving	–.306	.065	–.132***	–.330	.081	–.143***			
Part of campus life	–.03026	.037	–.023	–.008565	.047	–.007	–.07296	.060	–.058
Relations with White faculty	.127	.046	.080**	.119	.061	.071*	.134	.070	.093*
Self-confidence	.112	.034	.093***	.08260	.042	.068*	.182	.060	.142**
Need for Black political party	.008678	.037	.006	.07907	.049	.056	–.101	.058	–.081
Interracial dating	–.04288	.033	–.037	–.02189	.042	–.018	–.07194	.052	–.065
Share same problems	–.04307	.037	–.033	–.02057	.047	–.016	–.07609	.063	–.058
How far in school	.02820	.016	.048	.01759	.020	.030	.04209	.026	.073
R		.207			.198			.261	
R Square		.043			.039			.068	
N		1333			858			474	

Source: NSBCS-PWI African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

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Table 23.6. Linear Regression Models to Predict Considered Leaving (NSBCS-PWI)

	Total			*Female*			*Male*		
Variable	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*
Constant	4.881	.369		5.019	.442		5.119	.581	
Gender	.03566	.027	.035						
Considered leaving									
Part of campus life	–.06757	.015	–.121***	–.05359	.019	–.095**	–.09652	.025	–.180***
Relations with White faculty	–.04285	.019	–2.233*	–.05480	.025	–.075*	–.02339	.029	–.038
Self-confidence	–.07842	.014	–.149***	–.09254	.017	–.177***	–.05400	.025	–.099*
Need for Black political party	.07127	.015	.123***	.07237	.020	.118***	.06471	.024	.124**
Interracial dating	–.002097	.014	–.004	–.006934	.018	–.013	.009758	.022	.021
Share same problems	–.004670	.016	–.008	.03290	.020	.058	–.07484	.026	–.134**
How far in school	.006470	.007	.026	.006049	.009	.023	.005048	.011	.021
Grade point average	–.05386	.011	–.125***	–.05831	.014	–.134***	–.04829	.019	–.114**
R		.310			.311			.339	
R Square		.096			.096			.115	
N		1333			858			474	

Source: NSBCS-PWI African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

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Black party, the more likely they considered leaving the university (β = .124**). Lastly, we found students with higher university grade point averages were less likely to consider leaving the university (β = –.125***). For females, the higher their grade point average, the less likely they considered leaving the university (β = –.134***), and for males, the higher their grade point average, the less likely they considered leaving their respective universities (β = –.114**). Only for Black males, we found the more they believed Black students and White students share the same problems, the less likely they considered leaving (β = –.134**).

Midwest

Table 23.7 presents regression analyses for explanatory variables with university grade point average. Results indicated the decision to leave the university was positively correlated with high grade point average (β = .103**). Specifically, females who had considered leaving the university were more likely to report high grades (β = .131***). Moreover, students who believed their academic ability was high were more likely to report higher grade point averages (β = .348***). Specifically for Black females, those who believed their academic ability was competitive had higher grade point averages (β = .360***), and for Black males, students who believed their academic ability was competitive were more likely to report higher grades (β = .322***). Also, students with aspirations to pursue degrees in higher education were less likely to have high grades (β = –. 081**). This was true for the females who aspired to the highest degrees in higher education but had the lowest grade point averages (β = –.102**). We also found the more positive relations reported for White faculty, the higher the grade point average (β = .100***). Again this was reinforced with female students who reported positive relations with faculty and had higher grade point averages (β = .092*).

Table 23.8 presents regression analyses for explanatory variables with whether students considered leaving the university they were currently attending. Results indicated that students who were engaged in campus life were less likely to consider leaving (β = –.173***). For Black females in particular, the more engaged they were in campus life, the less likely they considered leaving the university (β = –.157**), and for Black males, the more engaged they were in campus life, the less likely they considered leaving the university (β = –. 201***). We also found those who experienced racial conflicts on campus were more likely to consider leaving the university (β = .122***). For females, the more racial conflict was evident on campus, the more likely they thought of leaving (β = .100*), and for males, higher incidents of racial conflict on campus, the more likely they considered leaving

Table 23.7. Linear Regression Models to Predict Grade Point Average (Midwest)

	Total			Female			Male		
Variable	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*
Constant	23.153	.553		22.901	.639		22.352	.975	
Gender	–.106	.061	–.056						
Considered leaving	.08509	.028	.103**	.107	.033	.131***	.02796	.053	.033
Part of campus life	–.002662	.026	–.003	–.002270	.032	–.003	–.01010	.045	–.014
. .elations with White faculty	.09256	.035	.100**	.08754	.045	.092*	.105	.058	.119
Self-confidence	–.03173	.033	–.034	–.07417	.041	–.077	.04846	.057	.054
Need for Black political party	.07202	.033	.073	.09087	.041	.089*	.03066	.056	.033
How far in school	–.04802	.019	–.081	–.06139	.024	–.102**	–.01264	.033	–.022
Academic ability	.402	.042	.348***	.413	.050	.360***	.388	.078	.322***
Racial conflict	5.295	.029	.062	.03988	.035	.046	.09350	.052	.111
Relations w/ White students	–.005250	.038	–.005	–.006008	.046	–.006	.01027	.070	.010
R		.427			.449			.405	
R Square		.183			.201			.164	
N		807			539			267	

Source: Midwest Dataset African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table 23.8. Linear Regression Models to Predict Considered Leaving University (Midwest)

	Total			*Female*			*Male*		
Variable	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SE*	*β*
Constant	.836	1.246		.204	1.530		1.296	1.999	
Gender	–.03177	.078	–.014						
Part of campus life	–.162	.032	–.173***	–.152	.041	–.157***	–.177	.052	–.201***
Relations with White faculty	.110	.045	.097**	.121	.058	.104*	.08431	.069	.080
Self-confidence	.02233	.042	.020	.06341		.054	–.04738	.068	–.044
Need for Black political party	.109	.041	.091**	.110	.053	.088*	.09470	.066	.085
How far in school	–.001785	.024	–.002	–.006008	.031	–.008	.01471	.039	.022
Academic ability	.03568	.055	.025	–.007460	.068	–.005	.157	.095	.109
Racial conflict	.127	.036	.122***	.106	.045	.100*	.187	.061	.186**
Relations w/ White students	.01236	.048	.010	–.04878	.059	–.042	.167	.081	.136*
Grade point average	.135	.044	.111**	.179	.056	.146***	.03876	.073	.032
R		.347			.327			.435	
R Square		.120			.107			.189	
N		807			539			267	

Source: Midwest Dataset African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

(β = .186**), and although they had positive relations with White faculty, they considered leaving (β = .097**). Furthermore, students with higher grade point averages considered leaving the university (β = .111**). This was primarily salient for females with higher grade point averages who had considered leaving (β = .146***). Lastly, we found for females, students with positive relations with White faculty considered leaving the university (β = .104*), and those who believed there is a need for a national Black party were more likely to have thought about leaving the university (β = .088*). For males, although they expressed positive relations with White students, they considered leaving the university (β = .136*).

UMLC

Table 23.9 presents regression analyses for explanatory variables with whether students considered leaving their respective universities. Results indicated that students who experienced higher levels of racial discrimination on campus were more likely to consider leaving the university (β = .252*). For Black females and males, selected variables were not significantly correlated with grade point average.

Table 23.9. Linear Regression Model for Considered Leaving the University (UMLC)

	Total		
Variable	*B*	*SE*	*β*
Constant	4.841	2.132	
Gender	.01630	.011	.158
Considered leaving			
Part of campus life	–.134	.112	–.147
Relations with White students	.001463	.141	.001***
White faculty grade unfairly	.07503	.118	.072
Racial discrimination	.301	.138	.252*
Racial background	.157	.205	.091
Grade point average	.04053	.131	.035
How far in school	–.02518	.088	–.033
R		.352	
R Square		.124	
N		86	

Source: UMLC African American Total Students
Significance: *p < .05;**p < .01;***p < .001

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Research on African Americans in higher education is generally relegated to explorations of the quantitative indicators of enrollment, achievement, and attrition. Correspondingly, too little is known about the qualitative experience of these students on college campuses (Davis, 1994). In an effort to further explore educational disparities, we incorporate perceptions of the campus milieu as articulated by respondents into our research. Focus groups were used to understand participants' experiences and beliefs concerning their position and perceptions of the university milieu. Focus groups have four strengths that provide insight to (1) explore and discover concepts and themes about a phenomena in which more knowledge is needed, (2) add depth and context to the understanding of that particular phenomena, (3) provide an interpretation of that phenomena from the point of view of the participants in the group, and (4) observe the collective interaction of the participants (Allen & Solorzano, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The focus groups covered these areas of inquiry:

- How students defined themselves
- How their peers who were non-African American defined them
- How they perceived the campus racial climate
- How particular experiences affected the way they perceive higher education
- To what extent has university environment affected their racial identity
- Whether Black females are at an advantage compared to Black males at the university

The responses of Black students who participated in focus groups at PWIs will be highlighted since the purpose of the chapter is to articulate the peculiar experiences and factors, which affect educational attainment for Black students in higher education. We found that African American respondents were primarily concerned with feeling alienated and excluded from the university milieu as a whole. This type of exclusion has negatively affected race relations, fostered lack of inter-group interaction, and has created tension between them and their student peers. Moreover, these students believed the most pressing issue was the lack of respect for African American students' academic ability. Previous research has proven whenever African American students perform an explicitly scholastic or intellectual task, they face the threat of being judged by a negative societal stereotype, which is a suspicion about their group's intellectual ability and competence (Steele & Aronson, 1995). For the purpose of our study, we found that non-Black students assumed African Americans were admitted to the university because of athletics, financial aid, affirmative action, or a family legacy. Their academic abilities are seldom validated. A male chemistry student replied: "You're generally one or the other. Either an affirmative action case or you're brilliant. They think that I'm something special because I'm Black and in the same class as they are. A lot of people have difficulty understanding that I'm not dumb." Responses of a Black male attending college more than a decade earlier reinforce treatment as an outsider on the university campus: "A serious problem is the stereotyping that if you're a Black student, especially male, you must be here on an athletic scholarship, basically a dumb jock."

These perceptions and stereotypes concerning the academic ability of African American students can have negative implications on self-esteem, academic self-concept, retention, and self-fulfilling prophecies. A male engineering student stated:

> At times I question how I would have performed at another university. I think that if you're around people that you are comfortable with, you perform a lot better. I was having a conversation with a friend and I told him that if I had gone to Howard, I would have done a lot better. I would have the opportunity to succeed because everyone starts at the same level.

Another female student articulates how a negative climate affects the academic progression of Black students:

> Students that I know left the university because they were dissatisfied with the way Blacks on campus seemed to be isolated from the rest of the people on campus and they felt Blacks on this campus were not given too much attention especially by faculty and staff.

A female student also added:

> I dislike the campus dynamics. I always question if I went to a smaller university would I have done better. I didn't think I would be confronted with race issues when I applied here. Since day one, I've had to deal with race issues.
>
> I'm made to feel inferior by instructors who, because I'm the only Black in the class, make me the scapegoat in class discussions.

A male history student stated:

> I've had experiences with my professors who made me cling to my Blackness even more. Professors purposely don't call on you when you raise your hand; I constantly get stopped late at night on campus by adults asking to see my ID (mind you I have a big backpack on). Anytime there's a crime with an alleged Black person, I know that 15 other brothers and I will get pulled over. Fingers start pointing.

Overall, the academic experiences of African American students are negatively affected by multiple racial incidents evident on campus. Moreover, their responses indicate they are burdened by stresses that go beyond standard academic pressures, such as negative experiences with faculty, strained peer relationships, racial stereotyping, and preconceived notions of their academic ability/aptitude. African American males have an entirely different experience from Black females at the university. Moreover, they are seen as a "threat" and their numbers on campus are small, which presents problems unique to the Black male experience.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Results from our quantitative study provide a broad context and background for the interpretation of our qualitative findings. In this regard, the survey results both supplement and expand upon lessons learned from the focus groups. Taken together, the snapshot view (provided by surveys) and the movie view (provided by focus groups) combine to tell us much about the nature, structure, and process of the perceptions and experiences of African American students who attend HBCUs and PWIs.

The initial objective of this chapter was to articulate differences in higher education experiences and outcomes for Black students by gender and campus context. We then ask how these experiences adversely affect the academic progression of students at HBCUs and PWIs. In our first research statement, we posited that Black males would be at an advantage at an HBCU and would exhibit higher levels of engagement and positive outcomes compared to their female counterparts at an HBCU. Moreover, we believed males would assert themselves at higher levels than females. For African American males who attended an HBCU (NSBCS), our findings indicated they received more positive evaluations from faculty, reported higher levels of self-confidence compared to their female counterparts, expressed political views more readily, believed receiving a degree in higher education was extremely important, and the further they expected to pursue higher education, the higher their university grade point average.

In our second research statement, we posited Black males and females at PWIs would more likely disengage and express negative outcomes compared to their peers with negative consequences for their degree progress and academic achievement. Moreover, we believed Black females would fare better academically and have more positive outcomes compared to Black males at a PWI. In contrast to males who attended an HBCU, Black males who attended a PWI (NSBCS) believed White faculty sometimes graded students of color unfairly, their levels of self-confidence were above average (below males at an HBCU), and the more they believed in the need for a national Black political party, the more likely they considered leaving. From this, their racial identities were continuously challenged as a result of the hostile racial environment on campus and as a result, many had considered leaving the university.

The responses of African American males in the Midwest study mirrored the responses of Black students who attended a PWI in the NSBCS study. Male students believed there was substantial racial separation on campus; felt as though their academic ability was continuously challenged by faculty and peers; reported poor relations with faculty, peers, and other Black students; rated their self-esteem as average, which was lower than Black males who attended an HBCU; disengaged from campus life; and the more racial incidents on campus were evident, the more likely they considered leaving. Moreover, for students in the UMLC dataset, the more likely they experienced levels of racial discrimination on campus, the more likely they considered leaving the university, the majority of Black males believed they were sometimes graded unfairly by White faculty, and agreed Whites are trying to keep non-Whites down. Taken together, Black students at PWIs expressed more negative outcomes than those at an HBCU, which supported our second hypothesis.

Lastly, we posited that perceptions of campus milieu and experiences of Black males and females at PWIs would improve over the time periods studied. We found that this statement was not supported by our qualitative data. In general, Black male and female students at PWIs were adversely affected by stereotyping, which had negative implications on degree progression, academic attainment, self-confidence, and the racial climate on campus.

CONCLUSION

Factors that shape the academic experiences for African American students have direct implications on self-perceptions, interaction with peer groups, and general satisfaction concerning the college experience as a whole. For the students in this study, the obstacles that impede academic attainment were both psychological and structural. From being ignored in the classroom by professors to the denial of earned grades, we can see why African American students are diminishing in numbers in higher education. As we have discovered in this study, psychological variables such as stereotyping, exclusion, and isolation directly affect self-esteem, which in turn stagnates intellectual development. As validated in the current research study, previous literature on African American students suggests that Black students at PWIs experience a number of psychosocial problems and that these problems manifest as significant predictors of academic outcomes (Davis, 1994). Fortunately, students in the study recognized that discriminatory behaviors were directed toward them because of their race, not their academic ability. Moreover, the experiences and perceptions of these students have shown that even at high levels of accomplishment, where educational conditions might on the surface appear to be equal, inequality and discrimination still exist. We can affirm that campus racial climate has an adverse affect on academic attainment and performance, especially for African American male students. Examining data from an HBCU and PWI indicates that students who are less likely to encounter negative racial incidents on campus are more likely to do well in college and to persist to graduate school. Moreover, HBCUs have larger populations of Black students and a larger proportion of faculty of color than PWIs. From this, negative racial experiences are less likely to occur and students' academic progression is nurtured in a way that encourages persistence and leads to more positive academic outcomes.

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CHAPTER 24

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ATTITUDES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

The Impact of Educational Aspirations, Self-Interest, and Racial Affect

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BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Due to the lack of diversity that existed at higher learning institutions, Executive Order 11246 was established in an effort to combat racial discrimination and to remove barriers that restricted access to gainful educational and employment opportunities for people of color (Crosby, 1994; Fleming, Gill, & Swinton, 1978). Originally enacted to remedy racial injustice of African Americans and promote a nondiscriminatory society, affirmative action in higher education evolved into a series of policies and

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Surmounting All Odds, pages 595–619
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programs that sought to equalize opportunities among disadvantaged and underrepresented groups (Fleming et al., 1978; Trent, 1991). Affirmative action has been met with resistance by its critics and praised by its advocates from the onset. Some scholars contend that opposition to affirmative action conveys public opinion finding fault with a moral basis for affirmative action that attempts to pay a historical debt to people previously discriminated against (Boris, 1998; Feinberg, 1996; Trent, 1991).

The earliest challenge to the use of affirmative action surrounded the appropriateness of race in admissions within higher education. As early as *DeFunis v. Odegaard* (1973) to *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996), various foundations and institutions of higher learning have been struck with lawsuits challenging the use of affirmative action in admissions, fellowships, scholarships, and internships for students of color (Barnes, 1996; Healy, 1998; Wright, 1997). More recently, the use of affirmative action in admissions at the University of Michigan (UM) was targeted for civil rights violations by the Center for Individual Rights (Lederman, 1997). The Center for Individual Rights turned its attention to the University of Michigan's undergraduate admissions following their success in dismantling affirmative action at University of Texas at Austin's law school. The students represented in this case contend that different standards were used for admitting students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds. However, unlike the *Hopwood* case that revolved around *Adarand v. Pena* (1995), the UM case is based on the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Sixth Circuit Court has since been ruled in favor of Michigan's current consideration of race in admissions decisions (Lederman, 1997; University of Michigan, 2000). However, the existence of affirmative action in higher education remains a divisive issue and irrespective of the level of entry (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, or professional), the use of race as one factor among many in postsecondary admissions considerations has been questioned. Consequently the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the suit against the University of Michigan in April 2003 (Schmidt, 2002; University of Michigan, 2002).

Although right-wing conservatives have largely mounted the attack on affirmative action, resistance has sprung forth from a variety of segments of society. In light of public polarity and political pressures, colleges and universities are faced with the arduous task of implementing policies and carrying out practices reflective of educational inclusivity. With regard to collegiate responses, Sax and Arredondo (1999) assessed student attitudes toward affirmative action of 277,850 freshmen representing 709 U.S. colleges and universities. Using the 1996 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, their study examined attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions as it relates to gender, self-interest, political ideology, and prejudice/racism. The researchers found differences across and within racial/ethnic groups varied according to gender, racial background, socioeconomic status, academic preparation, and political ideology. Approximately 50% of college freshmen responding to the 1996 survey favored abolishing the use of affirmative action in college admissions (Sax, Astin, Korn, & Mahoney, 1996). For that reason, they concluded that first-year collegians might not understand the intentions of affirmative action attitudes.

Consistent with Sax and Arredondo (1999), Meader (1998) conducted a cross-sectional study of six Midwest institutions in Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio examining student attitudes toward diversity and race-based policies. The survey findings revealed that both African American and White students were more likely to oppose race-based policies when they perceived their institution as supportive of African American concerns. As a result of this finding, it was suggested that evaluating the need for race-specific policies was based on the perceived level of institutional support to meet the needs of students of diverse backgrounds (Meader, 1998).

Affirmative action is a contentious issue that has become synonymous with race-targeted, preferential treatment. In spite of the fact that issues concerning affirmative action in higher education largely occur in relatively selective four-year institutions, the affirmative action debate has reached community colleges as well. Community colleges are unique in that issues surrounding affirmative action in this segment of higher education have traditionally pertained to employment decisions. To date, there has been little literature specifically addressing student affirmative action in the community college (i.e., racial consideration in admissions and/or scholarships).

In the 1995 case of *Camarena v. San Bernardino Community College District*, the Pacific Legal Foundation filed a suit on behalf of Janice Camarena who asserts she was locked out of class for being White (Caso & Corry, 1996). As a student at San Bernardino Valley College, Camarena registered for English 101, later to find that the course was under the Bridge Transition Program that is targeted toward African American students. The purpose of the Bridge Transition Program is to match students with mentors who are of the same racial background, provide additional support services and seek to increase the transfer rates of students who are of African or Mexican descent. The suit filed in a Sacramento U.S. District Court forwarded that the college-operated segregationist programs and challenged it on the basis of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). According to Caso and Corry (1996), "community colleges have sacrificed the ideal of a prejudice-free society to an amorphous notion that the races are inherently different and need different treatment" (p. 44). While San Bernardino Community College maintains that Camarena's civil rights were not violated and that the open-door policy exists for all of its courses, the Camarena case was settled out of court. Because community colleges are open door, at least for most majors, the use of race surrounding opposition to affirmative action may not be evident in admissions for community colleges as they are with four-year institutions. In that case, affirmative action tensions could manifest through race issues within the community college curriculum through the various course offerings or perceptions regarding the fairness of such policy efforts as two-year students seek admittance to four-year institutions.

One technique for fostering minority participation in higher education is in the form of financial aid. Concerns surrounding affirmative action at two-year institutions have also extended to financial aid policies. Nevertheless, in recent years institutions of higher learning have been challenged for promoting race-specific scholarships (Jackson, 1990). The assault on scholarships for students of color received great attention in *Podberesky v. Kirwan* (1989). Similarly, at the two-year level the multi-campus district Northern Virginia Community Colleges (NVCC) faced a lawsuit for having a race-specific merit scholarship (Barnes, 1996; Wright, 1997). Unlike the University of Maryland's Banneker Scholarship funded with public money, the Leslie V. Forte Scholarship is a race-specific, privately funded award in the amount of $500. The Forte Scholarship is one of two awards for students of color offered to five students per year at the college (Barnes, 1996). In his complaint filed with the Office of Civil Rights, Christopher Thompson cited the *Podberesky* case and contended that NVCC "discriminates against White male and female students by continuing to offer race and ethnicity-based scholarships that appear unconstitutional" (Wright, 1997, p. 14). The Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that dismantled the University of Maryland scholarship program for African Americans also has jurisdiction over Virginia. Interestingly, the case against NVCC was settled out of court. As a result, the abridgment of race-specific scholarships hinders the participation of academically talented students of color at two- and four-year institutions.

Although educational policy efforts have been made to promote equal opportunities in higher education through scholarships and admissions, participation and degree attainment of African Americans suggest differential rates of completion (Astin, Tsui, & Avalos, 1996; Carter, 1999a, 1999b). In contrast to White collegians, community colleges have enrolled African American students in higher proportions than four-year colleges and universities over the last 20 years (Cohen & Brawer, 2002; National Center for Education Statistics, 2002; Rendon & Garza, 1996; Trent, 1986). Little over two decades ago, the National Advisory Committee on Black Higher Education and Black Colleges and Universities (1979) found 50% of all African American collegians were enrolled in community colleges as compared to 35% of all students in higher education. As we have entered a new millennium, community colleges presently enroll approximately 47% of all African American college students, suggesting that educational stratification within higher education has remained virtually unchanged among African Americans (Phillippe & Patton, 2000; Rendon & Hope, 1996). In fact, African American students are 39% of the total minority enrollment for community colleges (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999). Not surprisingly, African Americans are disproportionately represented in greater percentages at community colleges as opposed to four-year institutions.

Not only are African American students largely stratified in two-year institutions, they enter higher education at lower rates than their White and Asian American counterparts (Gillett-Karam, Roueche, & Roueche, 1991; Rendon & Hope, 1996). Given this fact, the role of diversity initiatives and opportunity enhancement (i.e., the use of race as one of several factors in admissions decisions) may aid in bridging the gap between two- and four-year educational attainments. Given the threat of affirmative action retrenchment in college admissions, community colleges may face the possibility of serving an even larger segment of first-generation African American students. Correspondingly, four-year colleges and universities may find it increasingly difficult to successfully admit African American students in large quantities (Gillett-Karam et al., 1991; Rendon & Hope, 1996).

Critics contend that the community college is not the optimal environment for those seeking bachelor degree completion (Brint & Karabel, 1989a, 1989b; Clark, 1960; Dougherty, 1987, 1994; Karabel, 1986; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1998). Although the transfer function is critical to gaining admission to four-year institutions for all students, particularly first-generation students of color, program completion rates are low (Bender, 1991; Brint & Karabel, 1989b). The onus for low transfer rates usually falls upon community colleges, not four-year institutions (Cohen, 1994; Dougherty, 1992). Consistent with the low rate of transfer, Pincus and Archer (1989) estimated that only 20–25% of all community college students aspiring to a bachelor's degree earn one and that African American two-year students were less likely to receive a baccalaureate degree than were White community college students. However, transfer for two-year African American students will become more seamless as more than 80 urban community colleges and historically Black colleges and universities have entered an articulation agreement to better facilitate transfer across state lines (Shek, 2001). In sum, these findings suggest that low rates of transfer coupled with issues of access and matriculation toward the baccalaureate for African American students needs greater attention from two- and four-year institutions of higher learning.

Roughly 40% of community college students plan to earn a bachelor's degree and average estimates for students of color often exceed 50% (Phillippe & Patton, 2000; Rendon & Hope, 1996). While its future is uncertain, affirmative action has unmistakably provided access to four-year colleges and universities for various disenfranchised students, particularly African

American students (Bowen & Bok, 1998). Affirmative action was necessary because American institutions could not be trusted to voluntarily consider women and applicants of color. However, as evidenced by "multicultural conservatism" (e.g., Ward Connerly, Condolezza Rice, and Clarence Thomas) the stance of African Americans toward affirmative action given the new demographic realities is not monolithic (Dillard, 2001; Sniderman, 1993; Turner & Pratkanis, 1994). Nonetheless, there is a common misnomer that people of color (within and between groups) view affirmative action similarly and hold beliefs that resemble one another (Falcon, 1988; Shingles, 1992). But members of racial/ethnic minorities have multiple group identities; as a result there is a continuum of social policy views, often shaped by individual political ideologies and minority consciousness. Minority consciousness extends from conservatism, to liberalism, to radicalism (Shingles, 1992). Political ideologies many times act in accordance with how individuals respond to sociopolitical matters (Hinich & Munger, 1994; Kerlinger, 1984). On that account, the political views of various groups, in this case African Americans, could assist in explaining attitudes people hold toward affirmative action that implies important considerations regarding social policy issues.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Given the open-door mission of community colleges, the vast numbers of first-generation, low-income, African American students enroll in two-year institutions of higher learning (Padron, 1992; Richardson & Skinner, 1992). Community colleges are often thought to be the conduit to the baccalaureate for those with limited opportunities to attend postsecondary institutions. Previous research has examined affirmative action attitudes of four-year students, African American and White collegians in particular (Amirkhan, Betancourt, Graham, Lopez, & Weiner, 1995; Constantini & King, 1985; Doverspike & Arthur, 1995; Kravitz & Platania, 1993; Meader, 1998; Nacoste, 1994; Sax & Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998). Studies examining attitudes of potential beneficiaries toward affirmative action has found African Americans supportive of race-based programming efforts at four-year colleges and universities (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Murrell, 1994; Dovidio, Mann, & Gaertner, 1989; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Smith, 1998). Notwithstanding, the literature is void of any discussion regarding how two-year students respond to affirmative action in college admissions. More specifically, the relevance of affirmative action in college admissions to African American students seeking to move from open admissions postsecondary institutions to colleges and universities with selective admissions criteria is unknown.

It is important to gauge the attitudes of students toward affirmative action in college admissions given the primary educational context of two-year African American students. When considering African American community college students, it is important to consider how the transfer function promotes movement from two-year to four-year institutions. It is equally important to think about how African American community colleges view affirmative action in college admissions as it interrelates with issues of access, intellectual aspirations, and future educational attainment. Assessment of the possible influence of factors such as demographic characteristics, educational aspirations, self-interest, and racial affect on affirmative action stance may reveal important discoveries as the current dialogue pertaining to affirmative action in higher education has neglected students at the two-year level.

Due to the lack of inquiry with two-year students, the purpose of the study was to examine affirmative action attitudes in college admissions of African American community college students. This study attempts to generate information regarding levels of support or resistance toward affirmative action among this group in relationship to individual characteristics, educational aspirations, self-interest, and racial affect. The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Are individual characteristics (i.e., gender, age, annual family income, parental educational attainment, enrollment status, and political views) associated with African American student attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions?
2. What is the extent to which individual characteristics alone predict affirmative action attitudes; to what degree do educational aspirations, then self-interest, and finally racial affect add to the prediction of affirmative action attitudes in college admissions among African Americans attending community colleges?

Significance of the Study

Traditionally, research has focused primarily on differences in the attitudes and beliefs of African Americans and Whites at the four-year level (Ayers, 1992; Meader, 1998; Sax & Arredondo, 1996). This study seeks to extend the literature on attitudes toward affirmative action by examining how an overlooked segment of the student population responds to the policy in college admissions. The study is important given the present climate surrounding affirmative action in higher education. Concerns that encompass equitable outcomes and address diversity goals make this study useful for both theoretical and practical reasons.

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To the extent that affirmative action in higher education seeks to improve access in postsecondary education (e.g., transition between two- and four-year institutions), community college student concerns, and perceptions regarding inclusion and access is important to determine. Additionally, the transfer role in community colleges is likely to become increasingly significant as states reassess ways and means of achieving a diverse student body. Examining affirmative action attitudes as reported by African American students at the two-year level could be useful to educators concerned with diversifying their respective campuses in addition to being beneficial to researchers interested in issues surrounding inclusion, transfer, participation rates, and student support services. As such, this study has implications for higher education policy, community colleges, and four-year institutions concerned specifically with the role of affirmative action in college admissions. A better understanding of student views on affirmative action is cardinal and would be useful in facilitating how college officials' review, revise, and implement policies and programming geared toward promoting diversity. The study offers a variation on what we currently know relative to potential beneficiaries. Hence, this investigation may be beneficial in determining if the African American undergraduate population at community colleges value affirmative action as a means of equalizing educational opportunities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Race and gender are among those ascribed characteristics that bear influence on the educational and occupational attainment of adults (Blau, Duncan, & Tyree, 1994; Sewell, Haller, & Ohlendorf, 1970; Sewell & Shaw, 1967). With regard to the status attainment theory, race and gender are issues of concern as underprivileged persons aspire to become college-educated. It is questionable whether equal opportunity and distributive justice has been achieved given the disproportionate stratification of disadvantaged African American students in community colleges (Brint & Karabel, 1989a). Irrespective of the high concentration of students of color, the present state of inequality is perpetuated as community college students are often disregarded in policy debates regarding diversity initiatives such as affirmative action in college admissions.

Within a broader theoretical context, social stratification has been modernized by promotion of competitiveness, selectivity, and meritocratic rewards based on strict numerical standards (Husen, 1987). Will the retrenchment of affirmative action in college admissions preserve rather than correct social stratification in higher education? A college education has been one way for students to gain status in American society. According to Blau and Duncan (1967), "the American occupational structure is largely governed by universalistic criteria of performance and achievement, with the notable exception of the influence of race" (p. 241). Persell (1977) argued that the inequality of society's social structure legitimates uneven access and breeds' disparities in educational and occupational attainment among the disenfranchised. As applied to this study, status attainment theory is adapted to determine whether African American two-year students feel affirmative action should be retained in college admissions.

METHODS

The sample for this study was initially defined by selecting those who first enrolled in 1996 as two-year college students. This sample was limited by restricting the analysis to African American two-year students (N = 2,425). Data obtained was from the University of California at Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute 1996 CIRP Freshman Survey. CIRP freshman surveys are designed to evaluate the importance of college on students (Sax et al., 1996). The CIRP database for four-year college students is most notable in the field of higher education, cited widely in the *Almanac of the Chronicle of Higher Education.* For four-year college students, CIRP conducts longitudinal follow-up studies at two- and four-year intervals following college entrance. Less evident in the literature, but still highly valuable, CIRP collects cross-sectional data pertaining to two-year college students and those data are the focus of this study.

Measures

Attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions served as the dependent variable. "Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished" was measured on a 4-point scale from 1 = "Disagree strongly," 2 = "Disagree somewhat," 3 = "Agree somewhat," and 4 = "Agree strongly." The dependent variable was recoded as a dichotomous variable (0 = disagree and 1 = agree) to conduct logistic regression analysis.

The 15 independent variables selected for use in this study was theoretically and operationally organized into four categories: (1) individual characteristics, (2) educational aspirations, (3) self-interest, and (4) racial affect. As previously stated, individual characteristics are thought to contribute to differential educational outcomes and subsequent status attainment (Grant, Horan, & Watts-Warren, 1994; Nordhaug, 1987). Studies have suggested that student background characteristics (i.e., pre-college attributes such as gender, age, and family income) may affect educational aspirations, degree plans, and attainment (Astin, 1993; Brint & Karabel, 1989b; Carter, 1999a, 1999b). For this investigation, individual characteristics reflect gender, age, and parents' highest level of education, annual family income, enrollment status, and political ideologies. For complete details of coding procedures, see the Appendix.

Educational aspirations as represented in this study consist of three independent variables that pertain to chances of getting a bachelor's degree, transferring to another college, and highest degree intentions. Students identifying "other" as the highest degree planned were retained for multivariate analyses to curb the total number of cases rejected due to missing data, under the assumption that a degree was desired that may not be equivalent to the response options provided. The intent was to include students that classified "other" under the assumption that a degree was desired that may not be equivalent to the response options provided.

With the exception of ability to finance education, variables selected to reflect self-interest (i.e., GPA and college choice) were based on similar constructs of self-interest operationalized by Sax and Arredondo (1999) in studying attitudes toward affirmative action in college admission with four-year CIRP Survey respondents. It was theoretically assumed that self-interest would influence attitudes toward affirmative action and what may be perceived to benefit oneself and one's racial/ethnic or social group. These variables were selected as measures of self-interest in this study as they were thought to reflect what drives student opinion and motivation in deciding whether affirmative action in college admissions maximizes benefits to themselves or their racial/ethnic group. Lastly, previous studies addressing affirmative action have contended that racial affect is related to individuals' policy attitudes (Bobo & Kluegel, 1993; Chang, 1996; Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1993; Dovidio et al., 1989). For this study, racial affect was measured by cross-race socialization, perception of racial discrimination, and promotion of racial understanding to reflect student attitudes toward other racial/ethnic groups.

Analysis

The data analysis involved (a) descriptive analysis and chi-square tests to determine statistically significant measures of association, and (b) multivariate data analysis. First, the descriptive analyses described African American two-year student attitudes toward affirmative action by each independent variable through a series of cross-tabulations in correspondence with research question one. The second research question was analyzed utilizing a hierarchical logistic regression estimating the odds ratios for each independent variable's impact on attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions among African American students at two-year institutions.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analyses

With respect to research question one, the findings illustrated a slight majority of students were female and most students were the traditional college age (i.e., 18–24 years of age). Fifty percent of African American parents were high school graduates or less while over one-third of students were from families with annual incomes of $14,999 and under, compared to only 35% from families having an income of $30,000 and over. Nearly all respondents reported being enrolled full-time students and nearly half identified themselves as middle of the road in terms of political ideology. Also interesting to note, 16% reported conservative political leanings and just less than one-quarter of those responding considered themselves liberal.

This sample of African American community college students had high degree aspirations and expectations when asked about obtaining a bachelor's degree or plans for degrees beyond the baccalaureate. Seventy-four percent felt that there was some or a very good chance that they would earn a bachelor's degree. Thirty-nine percent of African American collegians replied that there was some or a very good chance that they would transfer to another institution. Finally, 30% indicated the bachelor's degree as their highest degree planned, with 50% desiring a master's degree or higher.

Looking at the self-interest variables, slightly larger percentages of African American students reported a high school grade point average (GPA) in the C to B– range. The majority of students specify attendance at their first-choice institution (60%) and 43% of African American students had some concerns about their ability to finance their education. With regard to racial affect, little over 60% frequently socialized with members of other racial/ethnic groups. African American students held strong beliefs that racial discrimination was a continued problem (74%) and 59% felt it is very important or essential to promote racial understanding. Lastly, almost three-fourths of African Americans attending community colleges (72.4%) favored the use of affirmative action in college admissions.

Table 24.1 reports the percentages from the cross-tabulations of African American community college students' level of disagreement with dismantling affirmative action in college admissions. African American female students were more favorable toward affirmative action in college admissions than males ($\chi^2 = 10.697$ df = 1, p = .001). Age yielded a significant association with support for affirmative action abolition in college admissions. Older African Americans favored affirmative action more than younger African American students ($\chi^2 = 10.710$, df = 2, p = .01). Aside from gender and age, no other student background characteristics were found to be significantly associated with African American student affirmative action attitudes.

The association between educational aspiration variables and attitude toward affirmative action in college admissions was not statistically significant for African American students. However, GPA as a measure of self-interest was significantly associated with African American student attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions ($\chi^2 = 36.420$, df = 7, p =.000). It appears the higher the GPA, the greater support for maintaining affirmative action in college admissions. As for racial affect, the degree of association between support for abolishing affirmative action and the belief that racial discrimination is no longer a problem was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 90.790$, df = 3, p = .000). The majority of African American students believed racial discrimination was still a problem and thereby favored use of affirmative action in college admissions.

Table 24.1. African American Community College Students Disagreement with Abolishing Affirmative Action by the Independent Variables

Gender	(2,079)***
Female	74.9%
Male	68.3
Age Group	(2,073)**
Under 18	69.2
18 to 24	70.9
25 and over	78.5
Parental Educational Attainment	(2,036)
Grade school or less	75.6
Some high school	71.4
High school graduate	72.6
Some postsecondary	72.3
College degree	74.0
Some graduate school	71.4
Graduate degree	70.2
Annual Family Income	(1,638)
$14,999 and under	73.1
$15,000 to $29,999	75.9
$30,000 to $59,999	67.1
$60,000 or more	73.6
Enrollment Status	(2,057)
Full-time	72.1
Part-time	74.5

Table 24.1. African American Community College Students Disagreement with Abolishing Affirmative Action by the Independent Variables (Cont.)

Political Views	(1,898)
Far right	71.4
Conservative	73.6
Middle of the road	72.2
Liberal	73.7
Far left	70.1
Get a bachelor's degree	(1,933)
No chance	73.7%
Very little chance	65.9
Some chance	70.2
Very good chance	74.8
Transfer Intent	(1,928)
No chance	73.3
Very little chance	75.4
Some chance	68.3
Very good chance	72.1
Highest degree planned	(1,513)
None	57.4
Vocational certificate/ Associate's degree	69.9
Bachelor's degree	71.1
Master's degree	74.6
Medical/Law	78.4
PhD or EdD	78.1
Other	75.0
Academic Preparedness (H.S. GPA)	(2,025)***
A or A+	80.4
A–	74.7
B+	76.6
B	76.8
B–	74.9
C+	66.5
C	68.8
D	71.0

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Table 24.1. African American Community College Students Disagreement with Abolishing Affirmative Action by the Independent Variables (Cont.)

College Choice	(2,062)
First choice	73.1
Second choice	72.2
Third choice	70.9
Less than third choice	68.3
Concern about Ability to Finance Education	(2,004)
None	69.6
Some	75.2
Major	71.4
Cross-Race Socialization	(2,045)
Not at all	65.9%
Occasionally	71.8
Frequently	73.9
Racial Discrimination Is Not a Problem	(2,074)***
Disagree strongly	76.4
Disagree somewhat	70.6
Agree somewhat	48.7
Agree strongly	41.1
Promoting Racial Understanding	(1,933)
Not important	64.4
Somewhat important	73.6
Very important	72.5
Essential	75.0

LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Logistic regression analysis was conducted with the dichotomous dependent variable predicting the odds of agreement or disagreement with abolishing affirmative action in college admissions. There were four models forwarded comprised of the independent variables of interest characterized in blocks with individual characteristics as block 1, block 2 as educational aspirations, block 3 as self-interest, and racial affect as block 4.

Model 1

Despite no significant findings for individual characteristics for African Americans, the overall percent favoring affirmative action in block 1 was 72.69%. Gender had no significant effect on the odds of supporting affirmative action abolishment in college admissions for African Americans (see Table 24.2). Age was shown to impact student attitudes, suggesting the younger the student the less support for maintaining affirmative action in college admissions among African Americans. Hence, as age increases, the odds of supporting affirmative action abolition decrease, significant impact of annual family income, parents' educational attainment, student enrollment status, or political views on the odds of African American students supporting affirmative action retrenchment in college admissions resulted.

Table 24.2. Predictors of Abolishing Affirmative Action in College Admissions for African American Two-year Students (*n* = 974)

Variable	*B*	*SE B*	*Wald*^{a}	*Exp (B)*
Block 1: Model 1				
Gender				
Female	–.3273	.1497	4.782!	.7209
Age Group	–.0364	.0132	7.5895**	.9643
Annual Family Income	.0022	.0235	.0086	1.0022
Parental Educational Attainment	–.0427	.0305	1.9631	.9582
Enrollment Status	–.1020	.2219	.2112	.9031
Political Views	.0269	.0818	.1082	1.0273
Blocks 1 & 2: Model 2				
Gender				
Female	–.3190	.1518	4.4174	.7269
Age Group	–.0413	.0135	9.3442**	.9595
Annual Family Income	.0097	.0239	.1632	1.0097
Parental Educational Attainment	–.0230	.0313	.5396	.9773
Enrollment Status	–.0692	.2242	.0954	.9331
Political Views	.0278	.0822	.1142	1.0282
Get a Bachelor's Degree	–.0803	.0875	.8428	.9228
Transfer Intent	.0057	.0633	.0082	1.0058
Highest Degree Planned	–.2274	.0697	10.6418**	.7966

Table 24.2. Predictors of Abolishing Affirmative Action in College Admissions for African American Two-year Students (*n* = 974)

Variable	*B*	*SE B*	*Wald*[a]	*Exp (B)*
Blocks 1, 2, & 3: Model 3				
Gender				
Female	–.2825	.1533	3.3960	.7539
Age Group	–.0395	.0139	8.0969**	.9613
Annual Family Income	.0096	.0245	.1524	1.0096
Parental Educational Attainment	–.0237	.0315	.5679	.9766
Enrollment Status	–.0926	.2256	.1686	.9115
Political Views	.0280	.0822	.1161	1.0284
Get a Bachelor's Degree	–.0813	.0878	.8566	.9219
Transfer Intent	–.0153	.0655	.0543	.9848
Highest Degree Planned	–.2217	.0705	9.8836**	.8012
Academic Preparedness (GPA)	–.2522	.1335	3.5680	.7771
College Choice	.0821	.0787	1.0862	1.0855
Ability to Finance Education	–.0241	.1013	.0564	.9762
Blocks 1–4: Full Model				
Gender				
Female	–.1965	.1571	1.5644	.8216
Age Group	–.0332	.0140	5.6477	.9673
Annual Family Income	.0122	.0249	.2387	1.0123
Parental Educational Attainment	–.0188	.0321	.3435	.9814
Enrollment Status	–.0703	.2290	.0942	.9321
Political Views	.0036	.0837	.0018	1.0036
Get a Bachelor's Degree	–.0205	.0912	.0507	.9797
Transfer Intent	–.0112	.0667	.0284	.9888
Highest Degree Planned	–.2033	.0719	8.0002**	.8160
Academic Preparedness (GPA)	–.2436	.1353	3.2434	.7838
College Choice	.1031	.0799	1.6643	1.1086
Ability to Finance Education	.0026	.1033	.0006	1.0026
Cross-Race Socialization	–.0993	.1126	.7772	.9055
Racial Discrimination	.4674	.0919	25.8855**	1.5959
Promoting Racial Understanding	–.0424	.0806	.2763	.9585

[a]df = 1 ** $p \le .01$

Note: 0 = disagree with abolishing affirmative action; 1 = agree.

Model 2

The overall percentage classified correctly as favoring or opposing affirmative action remained the same for African American students with the addition of educational aspiration measures in model 2. Chi-square analysis reported a statistically significant improvement in model fit for African American students ($\chi^2 = 15.043$, df = 3, p = .002), whereas improvement in fit for model 1 was not significant. With the addition of education aspiration variables (block 2) in the second model, age continued to be the only student background characteristic with a significant effect on the odds of African American students supporting affirmative action abolishment. No significant effects of transfer intent or chances of getting a bachelor's degree on the odds of support for abolishing affirmative action in college admissions were found among African American students. Model 2 illustrated African American students were less likely to support abolishing affirmative action in college admissions as highest degree planned increased in level.

Model 3

The addition of a third block of variables in model 3 (i.e., measures of self-interest) was not statistically significant for African American students. In other words, GPA, college choice, and ability to finance education did not have effects on the odds supporting or disfavoring affirmative action in college admissions. However, age and highest degree plans remained significant in determining the odds of support for abolishing affirmative action among African American students. The overall percentage classified correctly increased slightly for model 3 (72.79%).

Full Model

The full model added a fourth block referred to as racial affect variables to the final equation. The addition of block 4 resulted in significant improvement in model fit for African Americans ($\chi^2 = 26.836$, df = 2, p = .000). The overall percentage classified correctly remained roughly the same for African Americans (73.10%). Unlike models 1 through 3, the full model did not produce a significant effect of age on predicting African American student attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions. However, similar to the first three equations, highest degree planned was significant in determining the odds of support for abolishing affirmative action for African Americans. At the $p \leq .01$ level, only views about racial discrimination significantly predicted the odds of African American students favoring affirmative action abolition. That is, the more the student believes racial discrimination is a problem, the greater the odds he or she opposes eliminating affirmative action in college admissions.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Similar to prior research, the results of this study reveal that African Americans approve of affirmative action (Bobo & Kluegel, 1993; Dovidio, Gaertner, & Murrell, 1994; Dovidio, Mann, & Gaertner, 1989; Sax & Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998; Stanush, Arthur, & Doverspike, 1998). However, in contrast to Sax and Arredondo's (1999) findings with four-year collegians, there was no statistically significant effect of annual family income on African American two-year student support for affirmative action in college admissions.

Results of this study suggest that African Americans in general are supportive of affirmative action, however, women, older students, liberals, those with high degree plans, higher GPAs and those placing importance on racial understanding had reduced odds of supporting abolishing affirmative action than other groups. Consistent with Sax and Arredondo (1999), students espousing conservative political views had a greater likelihood of supporting abolishing affirmative action than students having more liberal political views. However, this study could not discern whether attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions were associated with race-, gender-, or class-based policies since CIRP data did not make such distinctions.

While research has examined student attitudes toward affirmative action in college admissions (Amirkhan et al., 1995; Sax & Arredondo, 1999), even less is known about two-year student affirmative action attitudes, African Americans in particular. This study showed that African American two-year collegians have definite opinions regarding the use of affirmative action in college admissions. As many college students take the two-year option, the community college makes sense for a growing number of students because it is often the most academically, geographically, and financially accessible to women and students of color (Townsend, 1999). Although the literature has indicated that entering a community college with baccalaureate aspirations reduces one's chances of obtaining a four-year degree, a preponderance of two-year college students, particularly African Americans, do aspire to the baccalaureate degree. Consequently, African American community college students can be considered potential beneficiaries of affirmative action in college admissions, as many are first-generation college attendees from low-income communities. Higher education administrators need to be aware of multi-ethnic student attitudes toward affirmative action at two- and four-year institutions. More specifically, understanding both two- and four-year student views of affirmative action in college admissions may assist educational leaders in revising or reestablishing policies and programming efforts as tools for enhancing campus diversity (Chiang, 1998).

Faculty, administrators, and policymakers also need to reconsider who should participate in the current dialogue surrounding the use of affirmative action in higher education (Garcia, 1997). In this post–Proposition 209 era, changing demographics suggest that students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups will increasingly apply to college (Rendon & Hope, 1996), many of whom could be potential beneficiaries of affirmative action in college admissions. More students of color than Whites forego four-year colleges to attend community colleges due to their lack of finances, academic preparation, family obligations, and/or geographical restrictions. As the present debate over the use of affirmative action stems from divergent public opinions regarding entitlement to educational access and opportunity, views of students disproportionately stratified in community colleges should be heard. College leaders at all levels need to foster inclusionary policies that support students as they aspire to attain their highest degree planned.

Future studies should seek to further examine African American and other two-year collegians attitudes toward affirmative action to uncover the extent to which community college students have been exposed to the ongoing debate surrounding affirmative action in college admissions since it has primarily focused on baccalaureate, graduate, and professional school programs. Future research utilizing qualitative methods of inquiry to gauge the extent to which students have been exposed and are aware of the current debate may be useful in understanding the various positions taken by two-year attendants regarding affirmative action.

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APPENDIX

Table A.1 Dependent and Independent Variables of Interest in the CIRP Survey

Category/Variable	*Scale/Coding*
Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished (DV)	Recode into dummy variable 0 = disagree; 1 = agree
Background characteristics (Block 1)	
Gender	Recode into dummy variable 1 = Female and 0 = Male
Age	Recode to four categories 1 = Under 18; 2 = 18 to 24; 3 = 25 and over
Parents' annual income	Parents' income is measured on a 14-point scale from less than $6,000 to $200,000 or more. Recoded into new variable as measured by income with four categories: 1 = $14,999 and under; 2 = $15,000 to $29,999; 3 = $30,000 to $59,999; 4 = $60,000 or more
Parents' educational attainment	1 = grammar school or less, 2 = some high school, 3 = high school graduate, 4 = postsecondary other than college, 5 = some college, 6 = college degree, 7 = some graduate school, and 8 = graduate degree. Collapse mother and father's education and recode into number of years of school to adjust intervals (1 = 8, 2 = 10, 3 = 12, 4,5 = 14, 6 = 16, 7 = 17, 8 = 18)
Enrollment status	Recode to a dichotomous variable: part-time = 0 and full-time = 1
Political views	1 = far right; 2 = conservative; 3 = middle of the road; 4 = liberal; 5 = far left
Educational aspirations (Block 2)	
Get a bachelor's degree	1 = no chance; 2 = very little chance; 3 =some chance; 4 = very good chance
Transfer intent	1 = no chance; 2 = very little chance; 3 =some chance; 4 = very good chance
Highest degree planned	Collapse degrees and recode into 0 = none; 1 = vocational certificate/associate; 1.5 = other; 2 = bachelor's or B.Div.; 3 = master's; 4 = LL.B. or J.D.; 5 = Ph.D. or Ed.D; 6 = M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M.
Self interest (Block 3)	
Academic preparedness	1 = D; 2 = C; 3 = C+; 4 = B–; 5 = B; 6 = B+; 7 = A–; 8 = A or A+.
College choice	1 = first choice; 2 = second choice; 3 = third choice; 4 = less than third choice
Ability to finance education	1 = none; 2 = some; 3 = major

Table A.1 Dependent and Independent Variables of Interest in the CIRP Survey (Cont.)

Category/Variable	*Scale/Coding*
Racial affect (Block 4)	
Cross-race socialization	3 = frequently; 2 = occasionally; 1 = not at all
Racial discrimination	1 = disagree strongly; 2 = disagree somewhat; 3 = agree somewhat; 4 = agree strongly
Racial understanding	1 = not important; 2 = somewhat important; 3 = very important; 4 = essential

CHAPTER 25

CHALLENGING THE ACADEMIC DIVIDE

An Examination of Persistence Factors among Low-Income Students of Color

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> *Generally, of course, the better prepared achieve better than the less prepared and this is about as true for Blacks as Whites. But given any level of school preparation (as measured by tests and earlier grades), Blacks somehow achieve less in subsequent schooling than Whites (that is, have poorer grades, have lower graduation rates, and take longer to graduate, no matter how strong that preparation is.*
>
> —Steele (1992, p. 70)

Surmounting All Odds, pages 621–639
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INTRODUCTION

The problem of persistence among low-income students of color remains one of the most significant challenges facing American higher education. For purposes of our discussion, the terms "students of color" or "minority student" refer to African American and Hispanic (Latino) students, unless otherwise designated. Despite efforts to improve financial aid and student advising, colleges and universities in the United States continue to have low graduation rates for minority students. Several studies argue that the problem of persistence among underrepresented groups is both economic and social. Others go on to suggest that the root problem is also political, one of political will and subsequent public policy (Yeakey, 2003).

Using quantitative data we examine the impact of academic preparation, and post-enrollment activities on the persistence of disadvantaged youth. Utilizing the most recent data from the Beginning Postsecondary Student Longitudinal Study (BPS), a nationally representative sample of more than 10,000 college students at more than 800 institutions in the United States, provides a rich databank to determine the characteristics and post-enrollment activities of low-income and minority students who persist despite the odds. In so doing, we examine the relationship between economic, social, and academic variables and student persistence among low-income students of color in the United States.

THEORETICAL PREMISES FOR UNDERSTANDING STUDENT PERSISTENCE

College participation by minority students declined in the mid-1980s following a period of sustained growth. This trend was particularly evident among African Americans and Hispanics (Sewell & Hauser, 1980) who exhibited both the lowest participation rates as well as the highest propensity to drop out of college. Porter's (1990) analysis of the high school senior class of 1980, for instance, revealed that Latino college students were 13% more prone to withdraw from college than were White students, whereas African American college students were 22% more likely to drop out than their White counterparts over a six-year period. These low persistence rates (even over extended periods of enrollment in college) are particularly troublesome from a policy perspective given the relationship that the attainment of a bachelor's degree has on subsequent occupational and economic attainment. And, given the demographic projections that Latinos, followed by African Americans, will become the largest minority group by 2005, enhancing the academic retention and academic performance is a critical issue for not only research but public policy (Hernandez 2000; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census 1991).

Much of the empirical research on undergraduate retention for both minorities and nonminorities has relied on the theoretical premises advanced by Tinto (1975,1986), Bean and his associates (Bean &Vesper, 1990; Metzner & Bean, 1987), Cabrera and Nora (1994, 1996), Cabrera, Nora, and Castaneda (1993), and Cabrera, Castaneda, Nora, and Henstler (1992). Spady (1970), drawing heavily on the work of Durkheim (1951) and his theory of suicide, observed that the behaviors of students who drop out are analogous to the behaviors of those who contemplate suicide. That is, individuals considering suicide choose to withdraw from society because they lack shared values and normative support. Similarly, students persist or withdraw from college depending on their social and intellectual experiences within the college community. Tinto (1975) further enhanced the work of Spady by introducing a longitudinal, predictive model that explained more specifically the process that students go through before dropping out of college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980). Persistence in college is a function of social and academic integration. High levels of integration in both spheres is more likely to lead to commitment, and commitment is more likely to lead to persistence (Tinto, 1975). Thus, students who become fully integrated both socially and academically are more likely to become committed to the institution and committed to securing a college degree. Tinto (1986) also employed Van Gennep's (1960) "rites of passage" to enhance this theoretical framework. That is, college students go through rites of passage themselves, separating from family and childhood support, experiencing transition where they begin to assimilate new values and behaviors, and then fully incorporating these values and behaviors. Students who fail to complete successfully these rites are more likely to leave college.

Bean (1980, 1982, 1983) and Bean and his associates (Bean & Vesper, 1990; Metzner & Bean, 1987) introduced a compatible model based on employee turnover in organizations (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Price, 1977). Bean's model suggested a cyclical pattern whereby a student's beliefs are influenced by his or her experiences. These beliefs in turn affect the student's attitude toward the college and, accordingly, the student's attitude influences intentions (i.e., intent to stay or leave college) and behavior (i.e., actually staying or leaving). Bean (1980, 1983) and Metzner and Bean (1987) also placed considerable emphasis on external factors (e.g., the influence of significant others) who were believed to influence a student's decision to stay or leave college.

Several reasons have been advanced in the literature to account for these trends. Other researchers, most notably Hauser and Anderson (1991), explored the extent to which declines in college participation rates could be attributed to changes in college aspirations as well as to changes in high school completion rates among African Americans. After analyzing college aspiration trends for both minorities and nonminorities over a period of 30 years and taking into account high school completion rates and indicators of socioeconomic status, Hauser and Anderson could not find support for this hypothesis. Still other investigations have speculated that the decline could be attributed to changes in the composition of federal assistance and to patterns of financing higher education exhibited by minority students. Porter (1990) noted that declines in minorities' college participation rates correlated with the growth of student loans at the expense of grants. The correlation between minority retention rates and the average scholarship and fellowship is positive and statistically significant. That is, the minority retention rate tends to be higher at those institutions with high average financial aid awards. A study by the U.S. General Accounting Office indicates that, for students from low-income families, a shift of $1,000 from loans to grants increases the probability of graduation by 17% (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1995). However, analysis shows that all financial aid sources do not have similar impact on retention. The four main sources of financial aid are federal grants; state grants; privately funded financial aid from foundations, individuals, and corporations; and institutionally funded financial aid awards. Results show that minority retention rates tend to be lower at institutions with high average federal Pell grant awards. Over the last 20 years, the purchasing power of the federal Pell grant has declined from about 75% to about 33% of total college costs at public four-year institutions. Since the federal Pell grant is available primarily to low-income students, qualified students who receive it may have greater difficulty financing the costs of higher education at both public and private institutions. Similarly, Olivas (1985), Mortenson and Wu (1990), and Mortenson (1989) observed that African American and Latino students were less willing to go into debt to finance their college education than were White students. Moreover, Ekstrom (1991) helped to establish and test the proposition that students willing to go into debt to finance their education were more likely to enroll and persist in college.

An alternative explanation to the role of finances in the persistence process has stressed the influence of academic preparation for college. Tinto (1987) argued that overall differences in persistence rates between minorities and nonminorities were primarily due to differences in their academic preparedness rather than differences in their socioeconomic backgrounds. Tinto further contended that these ability differences arise from prior educational experiences at the elementary and secondary educational levels, which tend to favor the educational achievement of nonminorities relative to minorities. Some degree of support has been given to this hypothesis. St. John, Kirshstein, and Noell (1991), for instance, reported that the effects of ethnicity disappeared once academic preparation for college was taken into account for the high school class of 1980.

The proposition that a lack of adjustment to predominantly White institutions and that perceptions of prejudice (racial climate) may lower the quality of college experiences of minority students has emerged as a competing explanation for the differences in persistence rates between minority and nonminority college students. Fleming (1984), in particular, has argued that adjustment problems with the curriculum, lack of support services, financial problems, and the nature of interpersonal relationships with faculty, peers, and academic staff are some of the experiences that negatively impact minority students attending predominantly White institutions. Likewise, Tracey and Sedlacek (1984, 1985, 1987) have contended that noncognitive factors (i.e., self-concept, an understanding of racism, and the ability to cope with it) play a more critical role in shaping academic performance in college and persistence decisions among minority students than do cognitive factors such as academic ability and study habits. Suen (1983) and Loo and Rolison (1986) highlighted the role of congruency between the minority student and his or her institution while stressing the influence of feelings of prejudice and alienation on decisions to persist in college. As a whole, some degree of support has been found for these propositions.

On the other hand, Arbona and Novy (1990) failed to provide support for Tracey and Sedlacek's (1984, 1985, 1987) suppositions that noncognitive dimensions were predictive of college grades and persistence for African American and Hispanic students. Furthermore, they reported that cognitive variables predicted persistence among Hispanics, in opposition to Tracey and Sedlacek's presumptions. In the same vein, Nettles, Thoeny, and Gosman (1986) found that both cognitive and noncognitive factors explained college academic performance for a sample of African American and White students attending 30 eastern and southern institutions. Nettles and colleagues found that size and the ethnic composition of the institutions, aspirations toward a college degree, academic preparation for college, study habits, a student's satisfaction with peers, academic integration with the institution, and a feeling of discrimination were factors that affected college academic performance for both African American and White students. They also noted that although the intensity of the effects of cognitive and affective factors varied when the analyses were desegregated by ethnicity, the pattern of effects itself was remarkably similar for both minorities and nonminorities.

Several limitations must be observed in the studies investigating the role of perceptions of prejudice-discrimination on persistence decisions. Most of the research designs have been mainly descriptive and cross-sectional in nature; they either stress the extent to which perceptions of prejudice correlate with noncognitive factors or the extent to which students surveyed recall negative experiences at predominantly White institutions. The underlying assumption has been that such perceptions predicted their persistence. With few exceptions, little evidence has been found concerning the predictive validity of these perceptions in relation to persistence. Lack of controls for relevant cognitive variables and college-related factors may also pose restrictions as to the internal validity of the findings. In those few instances where models of college persistence were used, studies have focused on outcomes other than persistence decisions, while the process linking perceptions of prejudice-discrimination with campus environmental factors remains to be brought into account. Longitudinal research designs that systematically assess the extent to which perceptions of prejudice affect the persistence process based on sound models of student departure are still needed. In addition, more culturally sensitive factors (e.g., family support or the lack thereof, family responsibilities, financial aid, or working off campus) may be needed in predicting persistence decisions for minorities.

A FEW CAVEATS

Studies on the topic of minority and low-income student persistence have either lacked the guidance of a conceptual framework or have uncritically accepted frameworks developed from other sociopsychological phenomena. Investigators not using conceptual frameworks have been content with establishing the correlates of persistence rather than understanding the phenomenon as a dynamic process.

As noted earlier, since the late 1960s a number of models of persistence/attrition behavior have been developed and tested. These conceptual models have been based on selective findings of correlation research, together with certain sociological and/or psychological constructs adapted from theoretical frameworks for explaining other social phenomena. For example, both Spady (1970) and Tinto (1975, 1987) have proposed conceptualizations of attrition behavior heavily influenced by Durkheim's (1951) sociological explanation of suicide. Other prominent models (Bean, 1983; Starr, Betz, & Menner, 1972) derive their basic theoretical orientations from one or another of the recent conceptualizations of disengagement from work or work adjustment. (Dawis, Lofquist, & Weiss, 1968; Price,1977).

The emergence of earlier conceptual models is but a place to start to begin to understand the complexities of student persistence for low-income, minority students. As the preoccupation with the identification of correlates has been replaced by an interest in explaining the processes that lead to persistence and withdrawal behaviors, the models have held out the possibility of reaching an understanding of the underlying dynamics of persistence/attrition phenomena. Still, none of the available models has proved more than very modestly successful in explicating those dynamics (Pascarella & Chapman, 1983). Each of the present persistence/attrition theorists has chosen to ground his/her model in a framework used to explain some other social or social psychological phenomenon. But an assumption at the outset that dropping out of college is like committing suicide or leaving a job has turned out to be too severe a constraint upon the conceptualizing process (Attinasi, 1989). In addition, the models have been developed on the basis of, and tested with, data collected from institutional records and/or by means of fixed-choice questionnaires. These are methods of data collection that effectively strip away the context surrounding the student's decision to persist or not to persist in college and exclude from consideration the student's own perceptions of the process. Yet given the present level of our understanding of that decision, it is precisely those characteristics—the context of the decision and the student's perspective on the context—that investigations of student persistence in college must include. Researchers are now calling for naturalistic, descriptive studies guided by research perspectives that emphasize the insider's point of view or a more grounded approach.

Finally, for many years, research studies have treated underrepresented students as the problem to be fixed; with much of the research focusing on retention-related issues from the perspective of student failure. However, focusing exclusively on failure misses what might be understood were researchers to focus on those students who have overcome barriers and who have sustained their enrollment. In more recent years, research has begun to examine the nature of ethnic minority student experiences from the perspective of the students who had graduated or were approaching graduation from college to understand better the factors that facilitated their success. Primarily utilizing qualitative research methods, issues such as family support; self-efficacy; friends and peers; co-curricular involvement; establishing relationships with faculty and staff; finding a viable minority community on campus; money; personal responsibility; college environment; and involvement in campus organizations as a way to break down the environment are now being examined in an attempt to explain or understand the impact of these variables on persistence.

METHODOLOGY

The findings in this chapter are based on analysis of data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Study (BPS). The BPS is a longitudinal study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for

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Education Statistics (NCES). BPS is a sample of about 12,000 students who participated in the 1995–96 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:96).[1] The BPS sample was drawn from students who were enrolled in postsecondary education for the first time in 1995–96. Approximately 10,300 of the 12,000 students who first began in 1995–96 were located and interviewed in the first follow-up conducted in the spring and summer of 1998, approximately three years after these students first enrolled.

BPS is unique from other NCES longitudinal studies because it is not age specific. The first cohort of students interviewed for BPS was first-time college students of all ages. Because of the inclusiveness of this sample population it is necessary to set parameters for the group to be analyzed. This chapter examines persistence for those students in the BPS sample who enrolled in a four-year institution seeking a bachelor's degree or higher. Although many students enroll at two-year institutions, persistence beyond the second year for these students entails a different set of complex issues related to transferring up the postsecondary education ladder. Most of the students at four-year institutions are seeking a bachelor's degree, however, some students enroll in four-year institutions for other reasons, such as additional work-related training. These nondegree seekers are not included in the analysis because persistence is related to the goal of seeking a degree.

The data from BPS is analyzed using univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). ANOVA reveals any differences in the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable, persistence rate. ANOVA is the appropriate type of statistical analysis for answering the question of how background characteristics, academic preparation, and post-enrollment activities affect the persistence of disadvantaged youth.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

There are numerous descriptive variables in the BPS. For the purposes of understanding persistence among underprivileged students, we focus on background, socioeconomic, and regional characteristics. Table 25.1 shows how student persistence differs within and between selected variables. This table illustrates how some differences in persistence are related to a variety of background characteristics by showing unadjusted persistence rates and persistence rates adjusted for covariation. Prior to adjusting for covariation, the largest difference in rates of persistence are based on income and parent's highest education. The rate of persistence for low-income students is 21.8% lower than the rate for upper-income students (57.7% compared to 78.9%). Students with at least one parent with a bachelor's degree have a persistence rate of 77.9% compared to only 59.5% for those whose parents have no postsecondary education.

Table 25.1. Percentage of 1995–96 Beginning Bachelor's Degree Seekers at Four-year Institutions Who Were Still Enrolled in Spring 1998

	*Unadjusted percentages**	*Adjusted percentages***	*Least squares coefficient****	*Standard error*
Total	69.4	69.4	77.2	3.4
Gender				
Female	72.1	72.4 s	6.7	2.3
Male	*66.3*	*65.7*	—	—
Race/ethnicity				
Black	55.9	58.9 s	−11.3	3.8
Hispanic	66.3	70.4	0.2	3.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	75.4	76.0 s	5.7	4.6
White	*71.4*	*70.2*	—	—
Income				
Low-income (poverty)	57.7	61.7 s	−10.6	4.4
Middle-income	70.5	70.4	−2.0	3.3
Upper-income	*78.9*	*72.4*	—	—
Locale of high school (secondary)				
Urban	71.7	68.7	−1.3	2.8
Town/rural	70.9	69.4	−0.6	3.0
Suburban	*74.3*	*70.0*	—	—
Parent's highest education				
High school or less	59.5	60.7 s	−15.8	2.9
Some postsecondary	63.1	63.0 s	−13.5	3.2
Bachelor's or advanced degree	*77.9*	*76.5*	—	—

* The estimates are from the BPS:96/98 Data Analysis System.

** The percentages are adjusted for differences associated with other variables in the table

*** Least squares coefficient, multiplied by 100 to reflect percentage.

Note: The italicized group in each category is the reference group being compared. s = $p < .05$.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, "First Follow-up" (BPS:96/98). Data analysis by author.

Because some of the variables in Table 25.1 are related, such as income and parents' educational level, it is necessary to control for the covariation in order to determine the relationship between each variable and persistence. The difference in the persistence rate among low-income and upper-income students decreases from 21.8% to 10.6%. This difference in the unadjusted and adjusted persistence rate of students by income can be explained by the effect of the other variables, especially parents' highest level of education. The level of a person's education is strongly related to their education. Persons with a bachelor's degree earn nearly twice as much as those with only a high school degree, $59,485 compared to $33,110, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Income is also related to race, the average income for African Americans and Hispanics is less than what Whites with the same level of education earn (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). After controlling for covariation the variable with the largest effect on persistence is parents' highest level of education. Although the persistence rate by race/ethnicity decreased after adjusting for covariation, a significant gap in persistence still exists between Whites and Blacks.

As discussed earlier, previous research provides numerous explanations for the difference in persistence among African American students and White students. Key factors related to persistence are academic preparation and post-enrollment activities. The persistence rates in Table 25.1 do not control for the differences in level of college preparation and post-enrollment activities. Table 25.2 shows unadjusted and adjusted persistence rates for the descriptive variables in Table 25.1, and variables that describe academic preparation and post-college enrollment.

After controlling for covariance of all the variables in Table 25.2, the relationship between persistence and income, and persistence and parents' level of education decreases from large to small in magnitude. The difference in the persistence rate among low-income and upper-income students decreases from 21.2% to 5.7%. This change is the result of a significant increase in the persistence rate of low-income students after adjusting for covariance with the other listed variables, 57.7% to 66.6%. After controlling for covariance among the variables in Table 25.2, the persistence gap between students by parent's level of education changed significantly from 18.4 percentage points to 4.3 percentage points. When we control for covariance among the variables in Table 25.2, the persistence rate for student's with no parent with any postsecondary education increases from 59.5% to 69.9%. Only race/ethnicity maintained a moderate relationship to persistence after controlling for covariance of all variables in Table 25.2.

In addition to showing the relationship between persistence rates and background characteristics, Table 25.2 shows the magnitude of the relationship between persistence and academic preparation and post-enrollment activities: highest level of math in high school, rigor of high school curriculum, high school grade point average (GPA), type of employment while enrolled in college, hours worked while enrolled, talking with faculty outside of class, meeting with advisor about plans, attending study groups outside of class, and participating in school organizations. After controlling for covariation, two variables have a large relationship with persistence: type of employment while enrolled and hours worked while enrolled. The persistence rate for students who did not work while enrolled was 91.3%, but the persistence rate for students who worked off-campus was only 61.2%. The persistence rate for students working 20 hours or less a week was 86.4% compared to 57% for students working more than 30 hours a week.

Table 25.2. Percentage of 1995–96 Beginning Bachelor's Degree Seekers at Four-year Institutions Who Were Still Enrolled in Spring 1998

	*Unadjusted percentages**	*Adjusted percentages***	*Least squares coefficient****	*Standard error*
Total	72.1	72.1	50.4	5.3
Gender				
Female	72.1	73.7 s	3.8	0.0
Male	*66.3*	*69.9*	—	—
Race/ethnicity				
Black	55.9	63.2 s	–10.1	0.0
Hispanic	66.3	72.1	–1.2	0.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	75.4	72.6	–0.7	4.7
White	*71.4*	*73.3*	—	—
Income				
Low-income (poverty)	57.7	66.6 s	–5.7	4.5
Middle-income	70.5	73.0	0.8	3.2
Upper-income	*78.9*	*72.2*	—	—
Locale of high school (secondary)				
Urban	71.7	72.9	0.6	2.7
Town/rural	70.9	70.4	–2.0	2.9
Suburban	*74.3*	*72.4*	—	—
Parent's highest education				
High school or less	59.5	69.9 s	–4.3	2.9
Some postsecondary	63.1	68.9 s	–5.3	3.1
Bachelor's or advanced degree	*77.9*	*74.2*	—	—
Highest level of math in high school (secondary)				
Calculus	84.0	77.1 s	12.6	3.4
Trigonometry/Pre-calculus	74.8	73.3 s	8.8	3.0
Algebra 1/Geometry/Algebra 2	*54.8*	*64.5*	—	—
High school (secondary) curriculum				
Rigorous (college prep)	*76.5*	*73.0*	—	—
Basic or less	62.4	70.2	–2.8	2.6

Table 25.2. Percentage of 1995–96 Beginning Bachelor's Degree Seekers at Four-year Institutions Who Were Still Enrolled in Spring 1998 (Cont.)

	*Unadjusted percentages**	*Adjusted percentages***	*Least squares coefficient****	*Standard error*
High school (secondary) grade point average				
A to B (highest)	*78.4*	*75.4*	—	—
B to C–	51.5	61.4 s	–14.1	2.9
C– to F (lowest)	low n			
Type of employment				
On-campus	90.9	73.1 s	–18.2	4.8
Off-campus	62.4	61.2 s	–30.1	3.9
Did not work	*79.2*	*91.3*	—	—
Hours worked while enrolled, 1998				
20 hours or less a week	82.3	86.4 s	29.3	3.9
21 to 30 hours a week	63.4	73.1 s	16.0	4.1
More than 30 hours a week	*45.0*	*57.0*	—	—
Talk with faculty outside of class				
Never	*52.4*	*67.7*	—	—
Sometimes	72.0	73.1 s	5.4	3.6
Often	73.1	72.3 s	4.6	4.1
Meet with advisor about plans				
Never	*47.4*	*60.4*	—	—
Sometimes	72.3	73.8 s	13.4	3.8
Often	72.9	72.8 s	12.4	4.6
Attend study groups outside of class				
Never	*55.1*	*68.1*	—	—
Sometimes	74.0	73.8 s	5.6	3.0
Often	73.7	72.2 s	4.0	3.5
Participate in school organizations				
Never	*60.0*	*69.7*	—	—
Sometimes	77.3	73.1 s	3.3	2.7
Often	79.6	75.5 s	5.7	3.1

* The estimates are from the BPS:96/98 Data Analysis System.

** The percentages are adjusted for differences associated with other variables in the table

*** Least squares coefficient, multiplied by 100 to reflect percentage.

Note: The italicized group in each category is the reference group being compared. s = $p < .05$.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, "First Follow-up" (BPS:96/98). Data analysis by author.

Three variables show a moderate relationship with persistence: highest level of math in high school, high school GPA, and meeting with advisor about plans. The data shows a moderate correlation between persistence and highest level of math taken in high school and high school GPA. The persistence rate for students who took Calculus in high school was 77.1%, 12.6 percentage points higher than the persistence rate for students who never went beyond Algebra 1, Geometry, or Algebra 2. Also, students who earned a GPA equivalent to an A to B persisted at a rate of 14.1 percentage points higher than students with a GPA of B to C–.

When you control for the covariation among selected variables it is clear that there is a stronger relationship between persistence and post-enrollment activities than background characteristics. The moderately strong relationship between race/ethnicity and persistence is likely due to social and cultural factors. The significance of race and persistence should not be ignored, however, we must also address variables that appear to have a stronger correlation with persistence. The small relationship between persistence and income is likely due to financial pressures of college attendance. As stated earlier, low-income students are more sensitive to price increases. Also, because the parents of low-income students have fewer resources to pay for the cost of attendance, the unmet need for low-income students is significantly higher than the unmet need for middle- and upper-income students. Unmet need is the cost of attendance minus grants, loans, and expected family contribution. In 1995–96 the average unmet need at public four-year institutions was more than $3,000 for low-income students and less than $800 for middle- and upper-income students. At private four-year institutions the average unmet need was about $2,000 more for both groups of students, $5,300 compared to $2,900 (King, 2002).

LIMITATIONS OF DATA

As stated earlier in the chapter, BPS has several limitations. The most significant limitation is the time frame of the second follow-up. NCES conducted the second follow-up for BPS:96/98 in the spring of 1998, three years after the initial survey. A three-year follow-up survey provides a three-year persistence rate. A three-year persistence rate is significant in differentiating between enrolled students and dropouts, however, anything short of a five-year follow-up does not reveal the percentage of students completing a degree. An earlier longitudinal study by NCES provides a look at persistence over a longer period. In 1989 NCES surveyed a representative sample of students beginning postsecondary education. These students were surveyed again in the spring of 1994. Referred to as BPS:90/94, this study offers reliable data on persistence to graduation (Berkner, Cuccaro-Alamin, & McCormick, 1996). According to BPS:90/94 there was only a small difference between the persistence of Whites, Hispanics, and African Americans Among Hispanics and African American students who began at a four-year institution, 72% either earned a degree or were still enrolled in the spring of 1994. The persistence rate for the same group of White students was 76%. Asian Americans had the highest persistence rate, 86% (Berkner et al., 1996). Similar to the findings of this chapter, the earlier BPS (BPS:90/94) found a more significant difference in persistence rates by income. Students from upper-income families were more likely to attain a degree or remain enrolled compared to middle- and low-income students (81% for upper-income students, 71% for middle-income students, and 51% for low-income students).

Recently released data from the American Council on Education's Office of Minorities in Higher Education provides us with the latest data on enrollment and degree attainment. According to this data there is a 2.5 percentage point difference in the percentage of students who are African American, compared to the percentage of bachelor's degrees awarded to African Americans. The nearly 800,000 African Americans enrolled as undergraduates in four-year institutions represent 11% of all students at these institutions. During the same year, 1999–2000, African Americans represented 8.7% of students earning bachelor's degrees. Hispanics represented 6.7% of undergraduates at four-year institutions, and earned 6.1% of bachelor's degrees awarded in 1999–2000.

Table 25.3. Total Undergraduate Enrollment in Four-Year Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity: Selected Years, Fall 1990 to 1999

	1990	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
TOTAL	6,719,000	6,739,000	6,764,000	6,845,000	6,948,000	7,088,000
White (non-Hispanic)	5,319,000	5,012,000	4,989,000	5,014,000	5,063,000	5,127,000
Distribution rate	79.2%	74.4%	73.8%	73.3%	72.9%	72.3%
African American (non-Hispanic)	623,000	713,000	723,000	743,000	766,000	792,000
Distribution rate	9.3%	10.6%	10.7%	10.9%	11.0%	11.2%
Hispanic	301,000	404,000	422,000	437,000	456,000	477,000
Distribution rate	4.5%	6.0%	6.2%	6.4%	6.6%	6.7%
Asian American	286,000	377,000	391,000	403,000	416,000	428,000
Distribution rate	4.3%	5.6%	5.8%	5.9%	6.0%	6.0%
American Indian	41,000	55,000	57,000	60,000	60,000	61,000
Distribution rate	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Nonresident alien	152,000	180,000	183,000	187,000	186,000	203,000
Distribution rate	2.3%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.9%

Note: Data excludes persons whose racial/ethnic group and field of study were not available.
Source: American Council on Education. Nineteenth Annual Minorities in Higher Education Status Report. Washington, DC: 2000. (analysis by author).

Table 25.4. Bachelor's Degrees, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: Selected Years, 1991 to 2000

	1990–91	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
TOTAL	1,081,280	1,163,036	1,168,023	1,183,033	1,200,303	1,237,875
White (non-Hispanic)	904,062	904,709	898,224	900,317	906,305	928,013
Distribution rate	83.6%	77.8%	76.9%	76.1%	75.5%	75.0%
African American (non-Hispanic)	65,341	91,166	94,053	98,132	102,106	107,891
Distribution rate	6.0%	7.8%	8.1%	8.3%	8.5%	8.7%
Hispanic	36,612	58,288	61,941	65,937	70,008	74,963
Distribution rate	3.4%	5.0%	5.3%	5.6%	5.8%	6.1%
Asian American	41,618	64,359	67,969	71,592	74,102	77,793
Distribution rate	3.8%	5.5%	5.8%	6.1%	6.2%	6.3%
American Indian	4,513	6,970	7,409	7,894	8,418	8,711
Distribution rate	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Nonresident alien	29,134	37,544	38,427	39,161	39,364	40,504
Distribution rate	2.7%	3.2%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%

Note: Data excludes persons whose racial/ethnic group and field of study were not available.
Source: American Council on Education. Nineteenth Annual Minorities in Higher Education 2001-2002 Status Report. Washington, DC: 2000. (analysis by author).

CONCLUSION

The problem of low persistence among minority students is not entirely due to cultural and socioeconomic characteristics, and academic preparation. The findings presented in this chapter suggest that the decisions students make about working off-campus may have the strongest relationship with persistence. According to the analysis of BPS data, working longer hours at jobs off-campus reduces college persistence. Clearly, the need to work is greater among students from less affluent families. Students work out of a necessity to meet college and living expenses not covered by their financial aid. The findings in this chapter complement the theory that low persistence among minority students is primarily a financial issue that can be resolved with increased levels of financial aid for needy students. However, it is important to understand that when students work longer hours off-campus, they contribute to their own alienation from the campus environment.

All of the research on persistence and minorities proves that there is no single answer to the persistence problem among minority students. The lack of a critical mass of students, faculty, and administrators of color can create a climate that is, at the very least, passively hostile to students of color,

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which leads to further alienation and isolation among minority students. It is the inadequecy of financial aid which forces minority students to work longer hours at jobs off-campus, which takes time away from academic preparation. The persistence problem is troubling because the research suggests that minority students are failing to persist despite their efforts to gain a college education. When discussing persistence among students of color we are talking about less than half of the high school graduates who enrolled in a postsecondary institution. In order to improve the condition of African Americans and Hispanics in the U.S., it is necessary to increase the number of college graduates in these groups. There are two primary ways to increase the number of minorities earning college degrees: first, increase the number enrolling in postsecondary education, secondly, improve the rate of persistence for students of color in postsecondary education, through institutional programs and support policies, but also through grants and need-based scholarships. There is substantial research to inform the development of institutional policies that address the financial and cultural needs of students of color, but garnering the political will and support to financially aid poor students is far from a national priority. While such efforts will take time and money, to ignore the problem is to deny opportunity to thousands of students trying to improve their position in life. This chapter advances the notion that blame for failing to persist should not be placed solely on the shoulders of minority students.

NOTE

1. NPSAS:96 is a study based on a nationally representative sample of all students in postsecondary education institutions who were enrolled at some time between July 1, 1995, and June 30, 1996.

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CHAPTER 26

MISREPRESENTED AND MISUNDERSTOOD

Contemporary Dilemmas Facing HBCUs

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I have never been deceived into believing that black colleges were interim institutions, that would go out of existence when white colleges became liberal enough to accept Negroes without discriminating against them.

—Benjamin Mays (1978, p. 22)

The function of the Negro college, then, is clear: it must maintain the standards of popular education, it must seek the social regeneration of the Negro, and it must help in the solution of problems of race-contact and cooperation

—W.E.B. Du Bois (1993 p. 83)

INTRODUCTION

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have always surpassed the expectations of those who narrowly defined their mission. Created to provide a separate educational venue for African Americans, HBCUs man-

Surmounting All Odds, pages 641–663
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aged to create intellectual havens for those wishing to learn the canons of popular education, provide needed remediation, and implement open admissions policies for students of all races. While esteeming the African American experience students were taught the transformative power of knowledge and its function in facilitating social change. Yet despite their significant contributions, judicial and legislative edicts that supported the creation of public HBCUs are increasingly reinterpreted to question the value, purpose, and future of these same institutions. However, as Benjamin Mays (1978) and W.E.B. Du Bois (1993) concur, HBCUs have never been considered, at least in the African American community, transient or temporary, but rather an integral thread in the American higher education tapestry.

Presumptions that the legacy of unequal treatment have been reversed thereby reducing the need for HBCUs are problematic for at least two reasons. First, vestiges of unequal educational opportunity grounded in race still prevail in post-secondary institutions. A report sponsored by the American Educational Research Association and the Stanford University Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity concluded that students of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds in the 21st century do not have equal access to colleges and universities (Chang, Witt, Jones, & Hakuta, 2000).

Second, HBCUs' success is well documented. This latter point, educating students of diverse races, has been largely neglected in demonstrating the ongoing contributions of HBCUs to American higher education. In fact, the beneficiaries of HBCUs have been students of all races as supported by the composition of student bodies and degrees awarded. It is well documented that college attendance yields certain social and economic benefits ordinarily not accessible by the noncollege population (Thompson, 1978). When one considers graduation and attendance it becomes clear that precisely because of the existence of HBCUs and their interventions many of America's youth have ascended to the "positions of influence, affluence and prestige" (Justice Thurgood Marshall, cited in Tushnet, 2001, p. 351).

From a policy perspective, political shifts against HBCUs are not surprising since all decisions and nondecisions take place within particular political, economic, and social contexts. As such, alterations in public opinion and circumstances predictably precipitate reinterpretations and increased scrutiny of historic decisions. It is with this understanding that this chapter considers the legacy of HBCUs and raises questions about their plight in the 21st century. Since it appears that the HBCUs most severely under siege are four-year public institutions, they will be the primary focus. While this discussion focuses on data relative to four-year public HBCUs, it is important to note that in 1997, 698,800 (or 45%) of all post-secondary African American students were enrolled in two-year institutions. Two-year colleges include both traditionally White institutions (TWIs) and HBCUs (Evangelauf, 2001).

Attainment of a college degree has added significance in the new millennium since individuals earning college degrees earn significantly more during their work lives than individuals who do not (American Council on Education, 2001a; Chang et al., 2000). For example, on average the difference in annual earnings between those who hold college degrees as opposed to those who hold only high school diplomas is $20,085 per year in 1998 (American Council on Education, 2001b). Despite the relationship between post-secondary attainment, employment opportunities, and the potential economic gains for the nation, many Americans remain underserved by the institutions charged with preparing them for the world of work. In the case of HBCUs, the recent legislative and judicial affronts to their survival represent the systemic marginalization of not only students of color, but also the institutions that serve them.

The tenuous survival of HBCUs is evident when one tries to determine exactly how many public and private institutions are presently in operation throughout the United States and the Virgin Islands (see Figure 26.1).

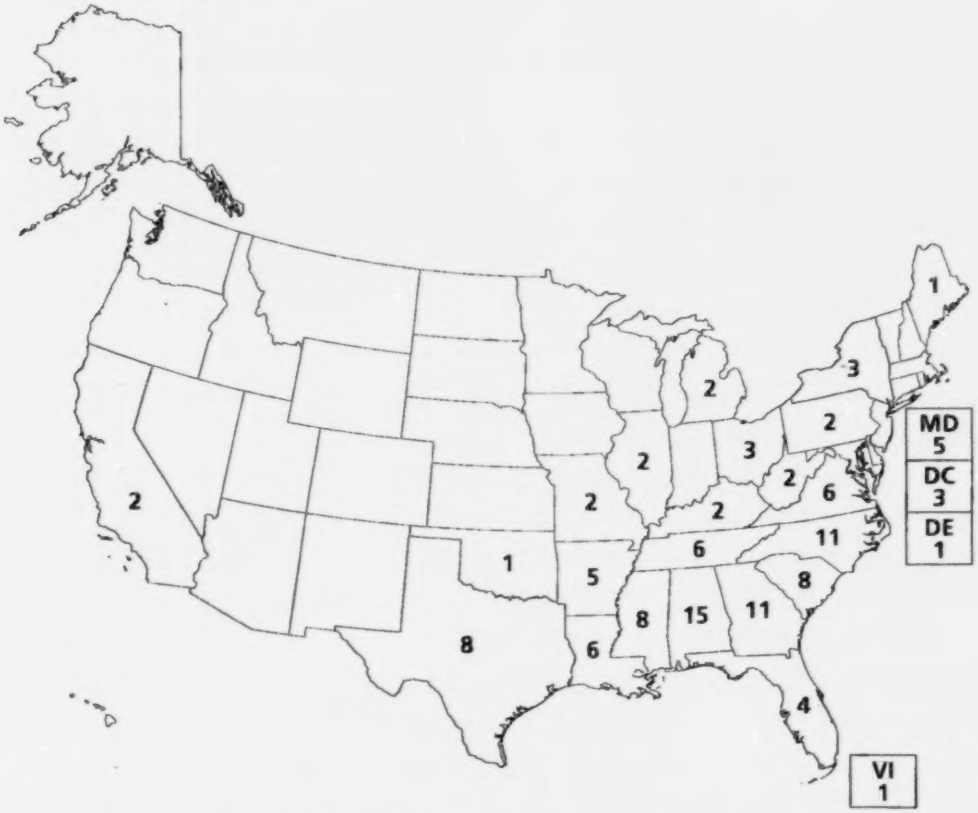

Figure 26.1. Numbers of historically Black colleges and universities by state. (Data from Howard University Digital Learning Lab (2001); Peterson's Professional Services (2001).

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Depending upon the source, the number of viable HBCUs fluctuates between 103 and 117. Nearly half of all HBCUs are public institutions primarily funded by federal and state sources (see Figure 26.2). The other half are private or independent institutions. A little more than three-quarters of HBCUs are four-year institutions while the remainder are community colleges. As per the amended Higher Education Act of 1965, an institution may be designated a HBCU if it obtained its charter before 1965, had as its primary mission the education of African Americans, and was accredited by a body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Wenglinsky, 1999).

While created by religious and governmental agencies as remedies to the inaccessibility of TWIs, in a contemporary context, HBCUs find themselves under siege in the wake of the Supreme Court's *Fordice* decision in 1992, subsequent decisions such as *Hopwood v. Texas*, and legislative shifts represented by California's Proposition 209. As a result, HBCUs established to provide higher educational opportunities to African Americans now find themselves in the unenviable position of justifying their existence, a fate unparalleled by their TWI counterparts.

Three contemporary challenges to HBCUs have emerged from the previously noted judicial rulings and legislation, which are desegregation compliance, program duplication, and freedom of choice (Brown, 2001). Each of these three categories shed light on how HBCUs, despite historic disadvantage, surpass their TWI counterparts in compliance with prevailing legislative and judicial mandates and meet the educational needs of a diverse constituency.

Ironically, some HBCUs have more integrated campuses than their TWI counterparts. By 1992, 3 HBCUs served predominantly Caucasian students, for 10 HBCUs Whites represented in excess of 20% of their student bodies. In the aggregate, 13% of HBCU student bodies during 1992 were White (Wenglinsky, 1999). A composite of all universities presents an image of a much less diverse student body. For example, all post-secondary institutions (including TWIs and HBCUs) served populations where only 11% were African American (Evangelauf, 2001). When student body race and ethnicity are disaggregated, HBCUs have done a better job serving diverse student bodies than their TWI counterparts, which is particularly noteworthy given their resources and sizes. These claims are substantiated by the growing body of qualitative and quantitatively based evidence that HBCUs contribute to the higher education community and the nation at large in meaningful ways that extend far beyond their originally prescribed missions.

Alabama
- Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University
- Alabama State University
- Bishop State Community College
- Concordia College
- Glasden State Community College
- J. F. Drake State Technical College
- Lawson State Community College
- Miles College
- Oakwood College
- Selma University
- Shelton State Community College-Fredd
- Stillman College
- Talladega College
- Trenholm State Technical College
- Tuskegee University

Arkansas
- Arkansas Baptist College
- Philander Smith College
- Shorter College
- University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- Shorter College

California
- Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
- Compton Community College

Delaware
- Delaware State University

Florida
- Bethune-Cookman College
- Edward Waters College
- Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University
- Florida Memorial College

Georgia
- Albany State University
- Atlanta Metropolitan College
- Clark Atlanta University
- Fort Valley State College
- Interdenominational Theological Center
- Morehouse College
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- Morris Brown College
- Paine College
- Savannah State College
- Spelman College

Illinois
- Chicago State University
- Kennedy-King College

Kentucky
- Kentucky State University
- Simmons University Bible College

Louisiana
- Dillard University
- Grambling State University
- Southern University (Baton Rouge)
- Southern University (New Orleans)
- Southern University (Shreveport)
- Xavier University of Louisiana

Maryland
- Bowie State University
- Coppin State College
- Morgan State University
- Sojourner-Douglass College
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Massachusetts
- Roxbury Community College

Michigan
- Lewis College of Business
- Wayne County Community College

Mississippi
- Alcorn State University
- Coahoma Community College
- Hinds Community College
- Jackson State University
- Mary Holmes Community College
- Mississippi Valley State University

Figure 26.2. Historically Black colleges and universities. Adapted from Howard University Digital Learning Lab (2001); Peterson's Professional Services (2001).

Mississippi (continued)
- Rust College
- Tougaloo College

Missouri
- Harris-Stowe State College
- Lincoln University

New York
- LaGuardia Community College
- Medgar Evers College
- New York City Technical College

North Carolina
- Barber-Scotia College
- Bennett College
- Elizabeth City State University
- Fayetteville State University
- Johnson C. Smith University
- Livingstone College
- North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State Univ.
- North Carolina Central University
- Saint Augustine's College
- Shaw University
- Winston-Salem State University

Ohio
- Central State University
- Cuyahoga Community College
- Wilberforce University

Oklahoma
- Langston University

Pennsylvania
- Cheyney University of Pennsylvania
- Lincoln University of Pennsylvania

South Carolina
- Allen University
- Benedict College
- Claflin College
- Clinton Junior College
- Denmark Technical College
- Morris College
- South Carolina State University
- Voorhees College

Tennessee
- Fisk University
- Knoxville College
- Lane College
- LeMoyne-Owen College
- Meharry Medical College
- Tennessee State University

Texas
- Huston-Tillotson College
- Jarvis Christian College
- Paul Quinn College
- Prairie View Agricultural & Mechanical University
- Southwestern Christian College
- Texas College
- Texas Southern University
- Wiley College

Virgin Islands
- University of the Virgin Islands

Virginia
- Hampton University
- Norfolk State University
- Saint Paul's College
- Virginia Seminary and College
- Virginia State University
- Virginia Union University

District of Columbia
- Howard University
- Howard University School of Law
- University of the District of Columbia

West Virginia
- Bluefield State College
- West Virginia State College

Figure 26.2. Historically Black colleges and universities. Adapted from Howard University Digital Learning Lab (2001); Peterson's Professional Services (2001). (Cont.)

EQUITY, EQUALITY, AND THE INTANGIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF HBCUs

The theoretical underpinnings of this chapter are grounded in Edmund Gordon and Carol Bonilla-Bowman's (1999) notions of equity and equality, which though very different concepts are often used synonymously. Both represent very different approaches to educational parity. Equality bespeaks the equal distribution of resources or opportunities regardless of differential need. Presumptions that all institutions and individuals begin at the same point are inherent in this approach. Equity, on the other hand, prefers disproportional distribution of resources as a means of reversing previous disparities. While Gordon and Bonilla-Bowman were applying these concepts to individuals, they can easily be extended to apply to institutions.

In the case of HBCUs, their very creation was due to an absence of educational opportunity for African Americans (inequality). Once created as public institutions under the auspices of the second Morrill Act (1890), funding for HBCUs and TWIs within the same states were not equal or equitable. This should be no surprise given the purpose of creating public HBCUs in much of the South was to gain access to federal funds to develop White land grant institutions. The newly created HBCUs were consequently narrowly defined and supported as purely vocational training in nature and necessary to maintain segregated educational systems (Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Sims, 1994).

Even in later years when arguably federal funding patterns were more equal than at HBCUs' inception, allocations failed to reverse the disparities created by decades of unequal funding. Thus, for public HBCUs funding patterns have never mitigated decades of willful neglect. Unremarkably, many HBCUs have been left in desperate need of physical plant improvements, technological upgrades, and other institutional investments. Restated, the benchmarks of equity have never been met. To further underscore the contemporary dilemmas of HBCUs, at least a cursory view of their history in a legislative and judicial context is required.

The oldest HBCU actually didn't start out as a post-secondary institution. Cheney University in Pennsylvania was created by Quakers in 1830 as a site for primary and secondary Black education. The first post-secondary institutions created specifically for Blacks were Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, chartered in 1854 by the Presbyterian church, followed by Wilberforce University in 1856, chartered by the Methodist Episcopal church. By the early 1900s, post-secondary institutions charged with teaching Blacks were private institutions funded primarily by the American Missionary Association (AMA), the Freedman's Bureau, or Black churches. Public colleges, largely created under the auspices of the Morrill Acts, were and continue to be heavily dependent upon government funding. Most of these public colleges were created as "normal or industrial" schools that did not confer baccalaureate degrees at their inception (Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Wenglinsky, 1999). However, even in their infancy HBCUs implemented ground-breaking strategies now considered commonplace.

Kannerstein (1978) proposed that one of the most distinctive contributions of HBCUs to American higher education has been a commitment to community service and social change as an integral aspect of university life. Restated, "the history of the Black college in America has embraced both the notion of service and the goal of training for leadership in a complex technological society" (Hedgepeth, Edmonds, & Craig, 1978 p. 17). Presumptions that one of the responsibilities of the educated is to actively participate as change agents within communities was initially unique to HBCUs because of the complexities of preparing individuals to function in a society that did not value them. As a result, colleges catering to African Americans operated as "two schools in one. First, it must prepare its students for full and efficient participation in a WASP-dominated society from whose overpowering influence they cannot escape; second, it must train them for a world of blackness in which they must live" (Henry A. Bullock, cited in Kannerstein, 1978, p. 48). While the incentive to link community service to education may have been a matter of self-preservation for African Americans, it later became accepted as a legitimate objective for any college or university. Though rarely attributed to HBCUs, commitment to community is just one of the many contributions of these institutions.

Given legislated mandates forbidding the mixing of races in schools in the South, many HBCUs were founded after the second Morrill Act in 1890, which made federal funds available for TWIs as well as the newly created HBCUs. For the most part the early purpose of HBCUs was to supply teachers and clergy, which was a critical undertaking considering that at the time (in 1860), 92% of the African American population lived in the South and 90% were illiterate. Until the 1930s, many HBCUs accepted students who had not earned high school diplomas, providing significant opportunities for remediation (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). By 1890, HBCUs were responsible for 1,100 graduates annually (Wenglinsky, 1999). Between 1896 and 1953, two-thirds of the African American population still lived in the South, the seat of most HBCUs. By 1954, 90% of Blacks attending college, roughly 100,000 students, matriculated at HBCUs (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Thus, a second historic contribution lies in the provision of remedial instruction in a post-secondary environment. Despite the segregated context of their birth, HBCUs never actively discriminated against students of other races relative to admission. On the contrary, racial and ethnic tolerance were imbedded in institutional mission statements. Consider the following quotes from Lincoln and Howard University documents:

> Lincoln will actively seek to enroll students of diverse race color, and national origin...since we believe that only by freely living and learning together shall we move to greater understanding of man's personal and collective problems. (Kannerstein, 1978, p. 34)

> While [Howard] was established for youth regardless of their nationality, religion, or sex it has always had a special commitment to the education of Blacks and other minorities. (Kannerstein, 1978, p. 35)

Thus another unsung contribution to the fabric of American higher education was an HBCU commitment not to discriminate and to be inclusive in the hope that learning together would facilitate greater understanding and tolerance between races.

MAJOR LEGISLATIVE AD LEGAL INITIATIVES

While not purporting to be an inclusive list, the cases and laws noted in Tables 26.1 and 26.2 are the ones most often cited in the research relative to the history and future of HBCUs in the United States. The prevailing theme of both judicial rulings and legislation in the 1990s was a reversal of protections afforded both African American students, in the way of affirmative admissions policies, and HBCUs as it related to their educating predominantly African American students. A consequence of the current litigious climate has been increased reticence on the part of institutions to consider race or ethnicity as an advantage in admissions decisions. Failure to consider legal benchmarks invites litigation, a consequence both TWIs and HBCUs would prefer to avoid (Coleman, 2001). To contribute to one's understanding of the significant shift away from meaningful support of both African American students and HBCUs, consider legislative trends.

Until the mid-1980s, HBCUs, at least theoretically, were recognized as contributing uniquely to the post-secondary community. Their mission and expertise as well as the conditions under which they were formed were unique and valued (see Table 26.1).

The combined effect of the two Morrill Acts was federal support for the separation of students in public higher educational institutions in states where African American students did not have the opportunity to attend TWIs. Though these acts permitted segregation they did at least support the notion that higher educational opportunities should be provided. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, in its acknowledgment that disparities in opportunity and funding were evident in public institutions, laid the foundation for the federal intervention on behalf of HBCUs reflected in the Higher Education Acts of 1965 and 1968. Both of the Higher Education Acts provided financial support not only to African American students but also to HBCUs. Executive Order 12677

Table 26.1. Significant Legislation (Adapted from Brown, 2001; Moore, 2000; Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Sims, 1994; Strasser, 2000; Taylor & Olswang, 1999)

Legislation or Case	*Year*	*Significance to HBCUs*
Morrill Act I	1862	Paved the way for the development of legally separated public colleges.
Morrill Act II	1890	Creation of land-grant institutions, which required that if separate schools were not created for Blacks, they should attend TWIs.
Civil Rights Act	1964	Empowered the U.S. Attorney General to bring lawsuits on behalf of Black plaintiffs
		Title VI prohibits spending federal money in segregated schools.
Higher Education Act	1965	Basic education opportunity grants for disadvantaged students.
		Title III strengthened financial support for "developing institutions," code for HBCUs, with federal funds.
Higher Education Act	1986	Reauthorization, which set aside $100 million exclusively for HBCUs. Each school was to receive at least $350,00.
Executive Order 12677	1989	President George H. W. Bush established a Board of Advisors on HBCUs to supervise the technology, planning, and developmental aspects of HBCUs.
Proposition 209 (CA)	1996	Forbids any public education unit or other public agencies from using any preferential treatment to ensure diversity based on race, gender, or ethnicity.

admitted that equitable distribution of resources between TWIs and HBCUs had not taken place. Under the auspices of this Executive Order, studies were launched to determine the best ways to enhance the capacity of HBCUs (Brown, 2001; Moore, 2000; Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Sims, 1994; Strasser, 2000; Taylor & Olswang, 1999). These attempts to remediate institutional disadvantage, unfortunately, did not persist.

California's Proposition 209 represented a major departure from post Civil Rights legislation when voters ratified a proposal to ban the consideration of race, ethnicity, or gender in education and other public endeavors. While considered a major blow to affirmative action, this proposition also signaled the beginning of a contemporary trend to diminish the protected status of HBCUs and a paradigmatic shift back to historical exclusionary practices in higher education (American Council on Education, 1999).

Recent court rulings also provide evidence of further dissolution of protection for HBCUs and their historic mission under the guise of enforcing the spirit of unilateral desegregation in post-secondary institutions. Table 26.2 summarizes some of the cases that reflect judicial shifts relevant to HBCUs, which mirror previously discussed legislative changes.

Table 26.2. Judicial Decisions (Adapted from American Council on Education, 1999; Coleman, 2001; Lederman, 1998a, 1998b; Roebuck & Murty, 1993)

Case	*Year*	*Significance to HBCUs*
Plessy v. Ferguson	1896	Legitimized and sanctioned separate but equal educational systems.
Brown v. Board of Education	1954	Racial segregation in lower schools and higher education is unconstitutional Recommended funding for physical improvements, the increase of financial aid for HBCUs.
Adams v. Richardson	1972	Used Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as the basis for mandated enforcement of desegregation laws, increasing the access and retention of minority students, faculty, and staff.
California v. Bakke	1978	Use of quotas in the admissions process were unconstitutional, however, race could be used as one of a myriad of favored admissions factors.
U.S. v. Fordice	1992	The designation of TWIs as comprehensive universities and HBCUs as regional institutions perpetuated a dual education system in Mississippi. The eight higher education concerns, five of which are TWIs and three HBCUs, represent a wasteful duplication of programs. Discounted the unique mission of HBCUs and the educational advantages of a culturally sensitive institution.
Ayers v. Fordice	1995	Directed comparable admissions requirements in all of Mississippi's public institutions, of which three were HBCUs. Differing admissions criteria were considered vestiges of segregation.
Hopwood v. State of Texas	1996	Race-conscious affirmative action admissions programs at the University of Texas were deemed unconstitutional.

Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education, and the *Adams v. Richardson* decisions all supported the mission and inherent value of HBCUs by focusing on various measures of educational disparity. By admitting that historical disadvantage based primarily on race existed, the courts supported the notion that there was value in preferential treatment to enhance higher educational participation not only for individuals but for society at large. The role of HBCUs in this context was secure in that for many students, they represented the only door to higher education and the preferred door for others.

While the case most often discussed relative to the insecure future of HBCUs is *U.S. v. Fordice,* much of the genesis of that decision comes from

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the *Bakke* decision in 1978. The *Bakke* ruling raised concerns about the use of race as an advantage in the admissions process. *Fordice* does however represent the most direct assault to HBCU survival. The court ruled that program duplication in Mississippi on HBCU and TWI campuses was wasteful. Furthermore, culturally sensitive campuses attained through purposeful admissions practices were no longer acceptable. *Ayers* (1995) added to the assault citing program duplication as undesireable.

While the *Bakke*, *Ayers*, and *Hopwood* decisions undermined affirmative admissions policies based on race, when implemented they also subverted HBCUs' preferential admissions policies of African American students. Thus, if TWIs using race-based preferences were guilty of perpetuating affirmative action and denying White students equitable consideration, HBCUs were by inference guilty of the same.

There are, however, fundamental problems with the underlying rational of these legislative and judicial shifts. There is clear evidence that inequities based on race still exist in America, thereby supporting the ongoing value of polices and practices that address vestiges of disenfranchisement (Carnevale & Fry, 2000; Chang et al., 2000; Trent et al., 1999). HBCUs have functioned in accordance with desegregation initiatives such as the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Higher Education Acts (1965, 1986) more effectively than TWIs. Programs similar in name between HBCUs and TWIs campuses are actually quite different not only because of disparities in funding but also in student graduation rates and graduate school participation. Nevertheless, HBCUs, in light of *Fordice, Ayers, Hopwood,* and Proposition 209, are faced with the unenviable challenge of operating on shifting sand, while their TWI counterparts disproportionately reap financial and philosophical support for practices that are known to disproportionately disadvantage students of color.

DESEGREGATION, PROGRAM DUPLICATION, AND CHOICE

Interestingly, there has been little said about the inherent and ongoing value of attending HBCUs despite the plethora of data that support their successes. Just as students consciously choose TWIs for various reasons, to include cost, family tradition, and potential for mentorship, students choose HBCUs for similar reasons (Thomas, 2001).

African American Student Enrollment and Degree Attainment

Enrollment of African American students in four-year undergraduate, graduate and professional programs has clearly increased over the last two decades. Between 1980 and 1999, for example, the number of African American students enrolled as undergraduates rose 30%, graduate students up 49%, and students enrolled in professional schools, such as dental, medical, law, and pharmacy schools, rose 43% (Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996, 2000, 2001). However, it is not enough to be satisfied with increased enrollment. More importantly, it is worthwhile to assess where students are enrolled, what the graduation rates are at these respective institutions, the proportion of eligible students who chose to go to college, and whether students chose to pursue graduate and/or professional degrees once obtaining bachelor degrees.

As exhibited in Table 26.3, in 1980, African Americans constituted 9% of all college students. Of the 234,300 African Americans attending four-year institutions, 93% matriculated at a HBCU.

Table 26.3. Selected Distribution of African American Students in Post-secondary Institutions (Adapted from Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996, 2000, 2001)

Description	*1980*	*1990*	*1997*	*1998*
Total post-secondary enrollment (all races)	12,086,800	13,818,600	14,502,300	14,507,000
African American post-secondary enrollment	1,106,800	1,247,000	1,551,000	1,582,900
African American post-secondary students as a percent of total enrollments	9%	9%	11%	11%
African American students enrolled in four-year institutions	234,300	722,800	852,200	927,500
Percent of post-secondary African American students in all types of four-year institutions	21%	58%	55%	59%
African Americans enrolled in four-year HBCUs	218,009	240,497	248,860	248,031
Percent of post-secondary African American students enrolled in four-year HBCUs	93%	33%	29%	27%

While all postsecondary institutions experienced an average student population growth of 17% between 1980 and 1998, HBCUs experienced a more modest 12%. By 1993, only one in four bachelor's degrees awarded to Blacks were conferred at HBCUs (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). In 1998, 41% of African American post-secondary students matriculated in two-year institutions. During that same year, of the African Americans enrolled in all types of four- year institutions, 27% were enrolled in four-year HBCUs (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996, 2000, 2001).

Interestingly, the numbers of White students attending HBCUs began to rise during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In 1970, student bodies at HBCUs such as Bluefield State, West Virginia State, and Lincoln University in Missouri educated a majority of students who were not African American but Caucasian. By 1992, 13% of the student body of Alabama A & M and 17% of Albany State and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff were White (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). As of 1992, 21% of all African American post-secondary students and 28% of all degrees conferred upon African Americans came from HBCUs (Wenglinsky, 1999).

Table 26.4 presents the numbers of African American students enrolled in various levels of post-secondary pursuits.

Table 26.4. African American College Enrollment by Level (Adapted from Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1996, 2000, 2001)

	1980	*1990*	*1995*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
All African American students	1,106,800	1,247,000	1,473,700	1,551,000	1,582,900	1,640,700
Undergraduate	1,018,800	1,147,200	1,333,600	1,398,100	1,421,700	1,470,500
Graduate	75,100	83,900	118,600	131,600	138,700	147,800
Professional	12,800	15,900	21,400	21,400	22,500	22,500

Table 26.3 and Table 26.4, show that while there have clearly been numerical gains in the numbers of African Americans attending college, the proportion of the college-age population has changed little since the 1980s (see Table 26.3). In fact, African American enrollments are dwarfed by the percentage and numerical gains of every other ethnic minority group (Carnevale & Fry, 2000; Trent et. al, 2000). Educational potential is further diluted as a result of the numbers of African American students who initially attend community colleges without pursuing four-year degrees. This distinction is critical since in 1997, 45% of all post-secondary African American students were enrolled in TWI and HBCU two-year institutions (Evangelauf, 2001). While community colleges provide valuable

opportunities for support and remediation, only 20% of African American students transfer from two-year to four-year colleges after completion (Carnevale & Fry, 2000).

Desegregation Compliance

> *Integration must never mean the liquidation of black colleges. Every good college and every college that is needed has a right to live.*
>
> —Mays (1978, p. 27)

Dismantling HBCUs in an effort to comply with legislative and judicial mandates have increasingly come to the forefront, without careful assessment of the numbers of non-African Americans earning degrees at HBCUs. HBCUs have always accepted White students and unlike their TWI counterparts have not institutionalized exclusionary admissions policies (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). In fact, some historians believe that HBCUs, "invented the practice if not the concept of open enrollment" (Thompson, 1978, p. 185). As such, the numbers of non-African American students receiving degrees from HBCUs is interesting to consider. Table 26.5 notes the numbers of degrees conferred upon African American students from all post-secondary institutions, and the numbers of non-African Americans that earned degrees from HBCUs.

Table 26.5. Distribution of Degrees Conferred upon African Americans in 1997–98 (Adapted from Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1996, 2000, 2001)

Description	*Bachelors*	*Masters*	*Doctoral*	*Professional*
All degrees conferred (all races)	1,184,406	430,164	46,010	78,598
All African American degree recipients	98,132	30,097	2,066	5,483
African American recipients as a percent of all degrees	8%	7%	4%	7%
Degrees conferred by HBCUs	29,780	6,411	377	1,348
HBCU degrees conferred to African Americans	25,506	4,388	260	943
Percent of all African American Candidates	30%	21%	18%	25%
African American recipients as a percent of HBCU degrees	86%	68%	69%	70%
HBCU degrees conferred upon non-African Americans	4,274	2,023	117	405
Percent of all non-African American HBCU degree candidates	14%	32%	31%	30%

Consider the initial mission of HBCUs and the legislated mandates to TWIs relative to inclusion. Comparatively speaking, HBCUs have done a better job of integrating their student populations than TWIs (in the case of African Americans). For example, of the degrees conferred by HBCUs, 14% of all bachelor's degrees, 32% of masters, 31% of doctorates, and 30% of professional degrees were earned by non-African Americans during the 1997–1998 school year. Now consider the proportion of African Americans earning similar degrees from all post-secondary institutions in America (see Table 26.6).

Table 26.6. Degrees Conferred in 1997–98 (Adapted from Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1996, 2000, 2001)

Degree	*All (all races)*	*African-American*
Bachelors	1,184,406	98,132 (8% of all bachelor degrees)
Masters	430,164	30,097 (7% of all masters degrees)
Doctorate	46,010	2,066 (4% of all doctorate degrees)
Professional	78,598	5,483 (7% of all professional degrees)

In the aggregate, when compared to all post-secondary institutions in the United States (including HBCUs) where 8% of bachelors degrees, 7% of masters, 4% of doctorates, and 7% of professional degrees are earned by African Americans, the converse is not true (Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2001). The 7% of professional degrees awarded to African Americans, for example, are diluted by the predominant contribution of HBCUs, which suggests that TWIs have not complied as closely with desegregation mandates as HBCUs.

Thus, HBCUs, despite embracing racial identity, African American culture, and community service managed to not only attract but facilitate the graduation of a diverse population of students. Instead of HBCUs being lauded for this accomplishment, public HBCUs are being threatened with extinction.

Program Duplication

> *In the final analysis, any college or university must be judged*
> *by the achievements of its alumni.*
>
> —Mays (1978, p. 25)

That programs offered at HBCUs and TWIs within the same state could possibly be identical is arguable, especially given historical funding patterns. However, even if said consensus could be reached, the results of involvement in those programs are still very different for African American students. While Table 26.6 reflects under-representation relative to degrees awarded, there are also significant differences between the retention rate of African American students who attend HBCUs (82%) as opposed to TWIs (66%) in a small sample study conducted by ETS. Furthermore, graduates of HBCUs when taking the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) are more apt to plan to enter graduate programs in science, engineering, or business than African American students graduating from TWIs (Wenglinsky, 1999). In general, African American HBCU students disproportionately aspire to attend graduate school when compared to African American students attending TWIs (Constantine, 1995; Wenglinsky, 1999).

Another example of how programs are not truly duplicated lies in faculty–student interactions. Culturally sensitive interactions, low student–teacher ratios and the benefits of shared experiences construct a nurturing environment for students. Students ill-equipped for college-level pursuits are not perceived as intellectually deficient but rather the victims of poor lower schooling, which can be remedied. Another reason for achievement differences lies in the quality of mentorship available in HBCUs and the value of interacting with highly educated individuals of one's own race/ethnicity as a positive educational force (Thomas, 2001). Thus, it is quite possible that " faculty makes the difference in the transformation of an academically handicapped, disesteemed Black youth into the urbane, self-confident, competent black college graduate" (Thompson, 1978, p. 194).

Evidence that there is no duplication of programs in HBCUs and TWIs is further revealed in graduation rates, career selection, and faculty–student interactions. Thus, applying Benjamin Mays's (1978) criteria for judging institutions, HBCUs have an impressive dossier of alumni, some of whom have international notoriety and some whose pursuits and contributions are local in scope. In either case, attendance in graduate school and other professional pursuits supports the notion that as institutions, HBCUs can be judged favorably by an evaluation of their alumni. Even if the courses and course materials were exactly the same, the results in terms of graduation rates and graduate pursuits are markedly different. Possibly students choosing to attend HBCUs make their decisions based on these support systems.

Freedom of Choice

> *Theoretically, the Negro needs neither segregated schools nor mixed schools. What he needs is education.*
>
> —W.E.B. Du Bois (1935, cited in Sims, 1994, p. 17)

There are numerous reasons why students choose to attend an HBCU. Cost, family tradition, mentorship opportunities, culturally sensitive environments, and opportunities for remediation all factor into the college-bound student's decision-making process. Culturally sensitive, socially cohesive environments have made HBCUs proving grounds for future community leaders, and prepared students for careers where as a group, they have been historically underrepresented, namely the sciences and engineering (Constantine, 1995; Thomas, 2001; Wenglinsky, 1999).

Some students choose to attend HBCUs who have the option to enroll in a TWI to perpetuate a family legacy. Attending HBCUs from generation to generation for African American students is no different than family traditions of attending Harvard or Yale, and as such, should be no less valued as a function of choice. Since there does not appear to be the same scrutiny questioning the right of Catholic, Hebrew, or Conservative Christian institutions to exist, why then are environments idiosyncratic to HBCUs devalued as a function of choice (Mays, 1978)? Obviously, the task of legitimizing an institution's existence is not equally or equitably distributed throughout higher education.

It is true that many public HBCUs were originally established to provide "separate" educational venues for African Americans. However, in practice these institutions have decades of expertise not only in recruitment but in retention and graduation success among all students in general and African Americans, in particular, which might also be a reason to attend an HBCU.

An Educational Testing Service (ETS) study revealed that students attending HBCUs tended to come from lower SES backgrounds and be younger than African American students attending TWIs. Given that information, according to ETS, the lower average cost of nearly $2,000 for an HBCU education as opposed to a comparable TWI education also influences choice (Barton, 1997; Wenglinsky, 1999).

Furthermore, some students who attend HBCUs would not be admitted to other postsecondary institutions because of lower high school academic standing or low standardized test scores, for example. HBCUs have never placed the predictive halo around standardized test scores (Thompson, 1978). Heavy reliance on standardized test scores would leave these students with no viable four-year higher educational alternative. Despite their rocky academic start, there is evidence that HBCU students irrespective of high school performance have a greater tendency to pursue academic sciences, business and graduate school than they would have if they had attended a TWI (Constantine, 1995; Wenglinsky, 1999). Furthermore, Black HBCU students are more apt to complete PhD programs than their counterparts attending TWI undergraduate programs.

Students seek out the programs, curriculum, and the ambience of universities that match their career goals and personalities. As a result, disbanding of HBCUs necessarily reduces freedom of choice for not only African Americans, but other students who have been beneficiaries of these institutions.

REFLECTIONS

> *...if America allows black colleges to die, it will be the worst kind of discrimination and denigration known in history.*
>
> —Mays (1978, p. 27)

HBCUs have historically been plagued by negative stereotypes, bias, inequitable distribution of resources, and inaccurate definitions of their role (Willie, 1978). Yet, despite formidable handicaps, these institutions, in many ways, have been examples of what TWIs should aspire to be, inclusive, community service oriented, and student centered. The need to even justify the educational benefit of institutions that for decades have produced results that, at least in the case of African Americans, are better than adequately financed and larger institutions is problematic. Yet, the judicial decisions and contemporary legislative patterns of late have precipitated the need to wage this battle.

Relative to desegregation compliance, HBCUs have never embraced "separate but equal" policies that prohibit admittance of individuals of any race. Based on the data from the U.S. Department of Education, ETS, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, in reality, HBCUs have done a better job of fostering integrated campuses than their TWI counterparts (Evangelauf, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996, 2000, 2001; Wenglinsky, 1999).

The struggles of HBCUs must also be placed in the context of larger post-secondary challenges. State budget deficits and the reduction in public funds for colleges and universities in the face of increasing demand for degrees will result in reductions in not only higher educational access but intensified competition for shrinking resources. In concert, growing numbers of America's youth are Hispanic and African American. These are also the students least likely to complete high school and pursue higher education than their White counterparts. Should African American students complete high school, they tend not to fare well in unsupportive environments with little contact between students and faculty (Barton, 1997). HBCUs acknowledge the particular needs of students and dispel the isolation many students feel on college campuses by virtue of class size, racial sensitivity, and faculty interactions. Fundamentally the choice issue for college for *any* student is to attend or not to attend and then to attend an HBCU or not to attend an HBCU (Constantine, 1995).

Advocates need to dispel the notion that program duplication exists and instead focus attention on HBCUs' success in cultivating student interest to pursue careers in fields where African Americans have historically been underrepresented, such as science, engineering, technology and business. Along these same lines, there are clearly some functions HBCUs perform better than TWIs, for example, in retention and graduation rates for African Americans (Wenglinsky, 1999).

Furthermore, the cost of attending HBCUs tends to be lower than comparable TWIs (Wenglinsky, 1999). In a time when remediation for students ill-prepared for the rigors of post-secondary coursework is being remanded to two-year institutions, HBCUs' commitment to educational intervention provides a critical service to students and to the broader society.

Survival of HBCUs relative to the challenges presented in this chapter will lie in their ability to prove to the satisfaction of the judiciary and legislators that they have already complied or are in the process of complying with mandates; that benefits accrue to students and society that are not duplicated by TWIs; and, that they provide a valuable alternative to TWIs as a function of choice. Failure to convince governing bodies may mean the merging reorganization or closing of these historic and essential institutions (Wenglinsky, 1999).

The role of HBCUs has extended and continues to extend far beyond the narrow confines of their genesis. Broader society's misinterpretation of their role and contribution continues to fuel the notion that as distinct institutions they are antiquated and irrelevant. On the contrary, HBCUs shattered the limits of their definers and as the data indicates, are as significant in the 21st century as ever. Though created in a separatist environment, as a group HBCUs have evolved into institutions of impressive stature with decades of success, which provide a vital alternative for all individuals. Sacrificing HBCUs on the altar of judicial and legislative tides would be tragically irresponsible and would result in the narrowing of post-secondary opportunity for thousands of America's youth.

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CHAPTER 27

NAVIGATING THE SHAPE OF THE RIVER

Helping Black Students Succeed in Colleges and Universities

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INTRODUCTION

Black student enrollment and success in American higher education has been an issue of concern primarily since the desegregation of state supported institutions in the mid-1960s. Prior to this period, the majority of Black students attended historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), which were established after the Civil War for the purpose of educating African Americans. According to Brown, Donahoo, and Bertrand (2001), "HBCUs are generally categorized as institutions of higher learning founded to educate the descendents of former slaves prior to 1964" (p. 554). Today, the proportion of Black students attending HBCUs has declined, while the proportion of Black students attending predominantly White institutions (PWIs) has increased. As Flemming (1984) states,

Surmounting All Odds, pages 665–679
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"despite the problems [associated with Blacks attending PWIs], Black students are on White campuses to stay" (p. 13).

The purpose of this investigation was to examine factors related to the success of Black students in higher education. The reality is that Black students are entering PWIs at increasing rates, but are graduating at decreasing rates. In other words, the retention and graduation rates of Black students at PWIs are not proportionate to the rate of Black student enrollment at PWIs. To gain a better understanding of this phenomenon, the focus should shift to Black students who have succeeded at HBCUs and PWIs and what factors they perceive to be related to their successful college experience. Understanding factors that contributed to the success of Black students who have completed baccalaureate degrees and have continued in their educational success can serve as useful information to help current Black students matriculate successfully through college.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Black Students and Higher Education

Institutions of higher education in America were created at a time when Black people were prohibited by law to attend or be present in any predominantly White establishment (Fleming, 1984; Garibaldi, 1991; Wagener & Nettles, 1998). Educational institutions were created, with discrimination at the forefront, to meet the needs of the dominant culture of society, which generally consisted of White, affluent males (Love, 1993). Embedded within the tradition of higher education are the values, belief systems, and culture of the dominant society, which often excludes the cultural beliefs and values of Blacks and other minorities.

The first HBCUs were established in the north as early as 1837 by Christian missionaries and other religious organizations (Brown et al., 2001). Cheney State University (1837) and Lincoln University (1854) in Pennsylvania, and Wilberforce University (1856) in Ohio were among the first HBCUs established. The establishment of HBCUs in southern states did not occur until the close of the Civil War. In 1965, HBCUs such as Shaw University and Virginia Union were established in the South. Another span of HBCUs was established as a result of the second Morrill Act of 1890, which mandated each state to provide education in agriculture and vocational training for the people of the states (Fleming, 1984). Separate institutions were created for Black students under the separate but equal ruling of *Plessy v Ferguson*. However, HBCUs were by no means equal to their White counterparts in terms of resources and facilities.

In 1954, the decision of the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case mandated the integration of public institutions of education. As a result of the desegregation movement, Black student enrollment in PWIs increased significantly during the mid-1960s. Prior to 1945, only one out of ten Black students enrolled in PWIs; however, by 1978 seven out of ten Black students enrolled in PWIs (Love, 1993). Despite the fact that PWIs continuously enrolled increasingly large proportions of Black students, they only awarded 60% of bachelor degrees to Black graduates in 1988 (Love, 1993). Wagener and Nettles (1998) report that HBCUs attract approximately 16% of Black students and they confer around 27% of bachelor degrees to Black students. Although the majority of Black students are enrolled in PWIs, it is important to note that approximately 35% of Blacks who earn doctorate degrees obtained bachelor's degrees from HBCUs (Wagener & Nettles, 1998). Black students appear to be making gains in higher education, they are not enrolled in higher education at rates proportionate to their percentage of the total population, which holds around 12–17% (Love, 1993).

According to the most recent Carnegie classification system, the majority of HBCUs are master's I and baccalaureate general institutions. The only doctoral/research extensive institution is Howard University. Coaxum (2001) argues that the Carnegie classification system is not reflective of the qualities and mission of HBCUs. Coaxum states, "HBCUs are misaligned in Carnegie because their scope and mission go far beyond the type and number of degrees they award" (p. 577). HBCUs should instead be classified by student characteristics upon entry, institutional characteristics, and student outcomes.

The mission of HBCUs reflects creating environments that encourage the intellectual and social development of Black students (Wagener & Nettles, 1998). In line with its mission, HBCUs enroll a large number of Black students who have low standardized test scores and come from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Fleming, 1991). However, it should be noted that students who attend HBCUs have high cumulative high school grade point averages, which is one of the best predictors of academic success for Black students. Historically, HBCUs pride themselves on providing small classes, remedial education, professional and academic internships, regular faculty advising, tutoring by faculty and peers, and tangible role models (Garibaldi, 1991).

College Choice

A few studies focused on the influential factors related to college choice for Black students. Freeman (1999) conducted a study interviewing Black high school students across the country in reference to influential factors related to choosing to attend HBCUs versus PWIs. Freeman found that

Black students who attended predominately White, private high schools desired to be connected to their roots and expressed lack of knowledge about their culture. These factors were related to their choice to attend a HBCU. On the other hand, Black students who attended predominately Black high schools were more inclined to pursue PWIs. Reasons for their decisions included, "the real world is not just Black" and the notion of being isolated from other cultures because they attended an all-Black high school (Freeman, 1999, p. 102).

Using data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program's (CIRP) 1993 freshman survey, McDonough, Antonio, and Trent (1997) found that the top three reasons for Black students' choice of HBCUs were religion, school's reputation, and desire of relatives. Reasons for choosing PWIs included recruitment by athletic department, desire to live close to home, and academic reputation of the institution. An interesting finding related to college choice in this study was the percentage of Black students who were accepted by their first choice. The authors indicated that 70% of all full-time college freshmen are accepted into their first college choice; however, only 55% of Black students were accepted into their first choice of college. Another disturbing result of this study was that advice from high school counselors had a negative impact on choosing to attend a HBCU.

Racial Composition

A great deal of the literature on Blacks in college focuses on the impact of racial composition on the development, retention, and graduation rates of Black students. Fleming (1984) conducted one of the landmark studies outlining major issues in understanding Black students in college, particularly issues related to Black students at PWIs and HBCUs, respectively. The literature on the impact of racial composition on educational outcomes for Black students can be broken down into two broad lines of inquiry. The first line of inquiry involves the cognitive and intellectual development of Black students who attend HBCUs versus PWIs. Critical thinking and communication skills are two common factors that are used to measure cognitive and intellectual development. Cognitive and intellectual development is also measured using standardized tests and grade point averages.

The second line of inquiry involves the impact of attending a HBCU versus a PWI on the psychosocial development of Black students. Psychosocial development takes into account such factors as racial climate, faculty relations, involvement in campus activities, and retention services and their impact on college students. Psychosocial development has been shown to have an indirect influence over the academic achievement levels of college students. The more students are involved in and feel a part of the college campus, the more likely they are to persist (Astin, 1984).

Cognitive and Intellectual Development

Research studies involving the impact of racial composition on the intellectual and cognitive development of Black students yield slightly mixed results. When controlling for pre-college characteristics, Black students who attended HBCUs showed comparable, if not greater, gains in cognitive and intellectual development compared to Black students who attended PWIs (Bohr, Pascarella, Nora, & Terenzini, 1995; Centra, Linn, & Parry, 1970; Flowers & Pascarella, 1999a, 1999b; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996). One limitation, however, is the sample of institutions represented in the national database consisted of only two historically Black institutions. Consequently, findings suggesting that HBCUs provide Black students with greater or comparable gains intellectually cannot be generalized to all HBCUs. Another concern is that HBCUs and PWIs in the data may differ in terms of institutional type. When studying the impact of cognitive and intellectual development, it is important to compare institutions that are alike. As stated earlier, the majority of HBCUs are master's I and baccalaureate general institutions. Therefore, it is imperative to compare historically Black baccalaureate general institutions to predominately White baccalaureate general institutions, and so forth.

In contrast, other findings suggest that Black students who attended PWIs had significantly greater National Teacher's Examination (NTE) scores than Black students attending HBCUs, after controlling for scholastic aptitude test (SAT) scores (Ayers, 1983). The results also indicated that Black students at PWIs scored significantly lower on the NTE than White students at PWIs, after controlling for SAT scores. An explanation for the results might be that other pre-college characteristics, which were not controlled for, may account for differences in NTE scores. Furthermore, the lower scores of Black students overall may be due to the fact that the NTE may not serve as an appropriate measurement of academic achievement for Black students.

Psychosocial Development

Historically Black colleges and universities are considered viable institutions for the success of Black students largely because HBCUs provide supportive environments in which students with at least average abilities can succeed (Garibaldi, 1991). The idea of creating supportive environments that in turn enhance academic achievement is the focus of the line of research related to the impact of racial composition on psychosocial development of Black students. Most of the previous research studies compared Black students at HBCUs to Black students at PWIs to assess differences in experiences related to retention and graduation rates.

Allen (1987) conducted one of the landmark national studies of 1,600 Black students enrolled in eight HBCUs and eight PWIs. The purpose of his study was to examine differences in the experiences of Black students delineated by the racial composition of the institution. The findings of Allen's study indicated that Black students attending HBCUs benefited from supportive environments, at the expense of limited physical facilities and other resources. On the other hand, Black students at PWIs experienced nonsupportive environments, but benefited from access to top-quality physical facilities and other resources.

Other research suggests somewhat different results. For example, DeSousa and Kuh (1996) found that HBCUs provide a rich learning environment for Black students, and Black students at HBCUs put more effort into academic activities than Black students at PWIs. However, campus involvement and out-of-class experiences were important for Black students at both types of institutions and were not negatively affected by institutional racism.

Similarly, Watson and Kuh (1996) found that Black students who attended both HBCUs and PWIs were comparable relative to involvement in campus activities and time spent using campus facilities. However, Black students at HBCUs perceived less emphasis placed on scholarly and intellectual activities than Black students at PWIs. This finding is interesting when juxtaposed with the previous finding that Black students place more emphasis on academic activities than Black students at PWIs. Despite the fact that Black students at HBCUs perceive less scholarly and intellectual activities on campus, they persist in terms of effort applied to academic tasks.

METHODS

Participants

The participants were eight graduate students pursuing master's and doctoral degrees at a predominantly White research institution. Of the eight participants, four were male and four were female. The four females were in doctoral degree programs. Two of the males were in master's degree programs, while the other two were in doctoral degree programs. Four of the participants attended a HBCU for their undergraduate education and four attended a PWI. The participants completed baccalaureate degrees at their respective institutions over a four-year period between

1987 and 1997. The majority of the participants (75%) were first-generation college students (i.e., highest level of education completed for parents was high school). According to the latest Carnegie Classification system, one HBCU was categorized as a baccalaureate general institution, two were master's colleges and universities I, and one was doctoral research intensive. Two of the PWIs were categorized as baccalaureate liberal arts, and two were classified as master's colleges and universities I.

Procedures

Data were collected qualitatively using semi-structured interviewing. The participants were interviewed individually to allow *their* voices to be heard. Also, "interviewing is one of the most common and most powerful ways we use to try to understand our fellow human beings" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 361). The interviews were structured, but flexible enough to allow participants to expound upon the items on the interview protocol. The items were designed to assess factors the participants attributed to the successful completion of the baccalaureate degree, why they chose their respective undergraduate institutions, and how the racial composition of the institution impacted their choice.

The following questions were asked of each participant in this study:

1. What factors contributed to the successful completion of your undergraduate degree?
2. Why did you choose to attend a historically Black college or university/predominantly White institution?

Each participant was also asked to respond true or false to each of the following statements and elaborate on their response:

During my undergraduate experience...

1. I had a mentor.
2. I attended church regularly.
3. I was a member of a Black Greek sorority or fraternity.
4. The faculty did not serve as role models for me.
5. I was a member of a National Honors Society.
6. My family members were supportive of me.
7. I felt prejudice and discrimination from my professors in class.
8. I participated in Black organizations in my major and on campus.
9. For the most part, I had close relationships and good communication with faculty members on campus.

Data were analyzed by identifying themes and patterns that emerged from the responses using an inductive process. The focus was on responses that stood out, were unique to, or characterized the perceptions and beliefs of the participants. Jones (2002) articulates the importance and responsibility of the researcher "to engage in an inductive analytic procedure while staying close enough to the data to create an in-depth understanding of the exact words and behaviors of the participants in a study" (p. 468). This process is critical in communicating the participant's story to a larger audience in a way that is recognizable to the individual(s) who told the story.

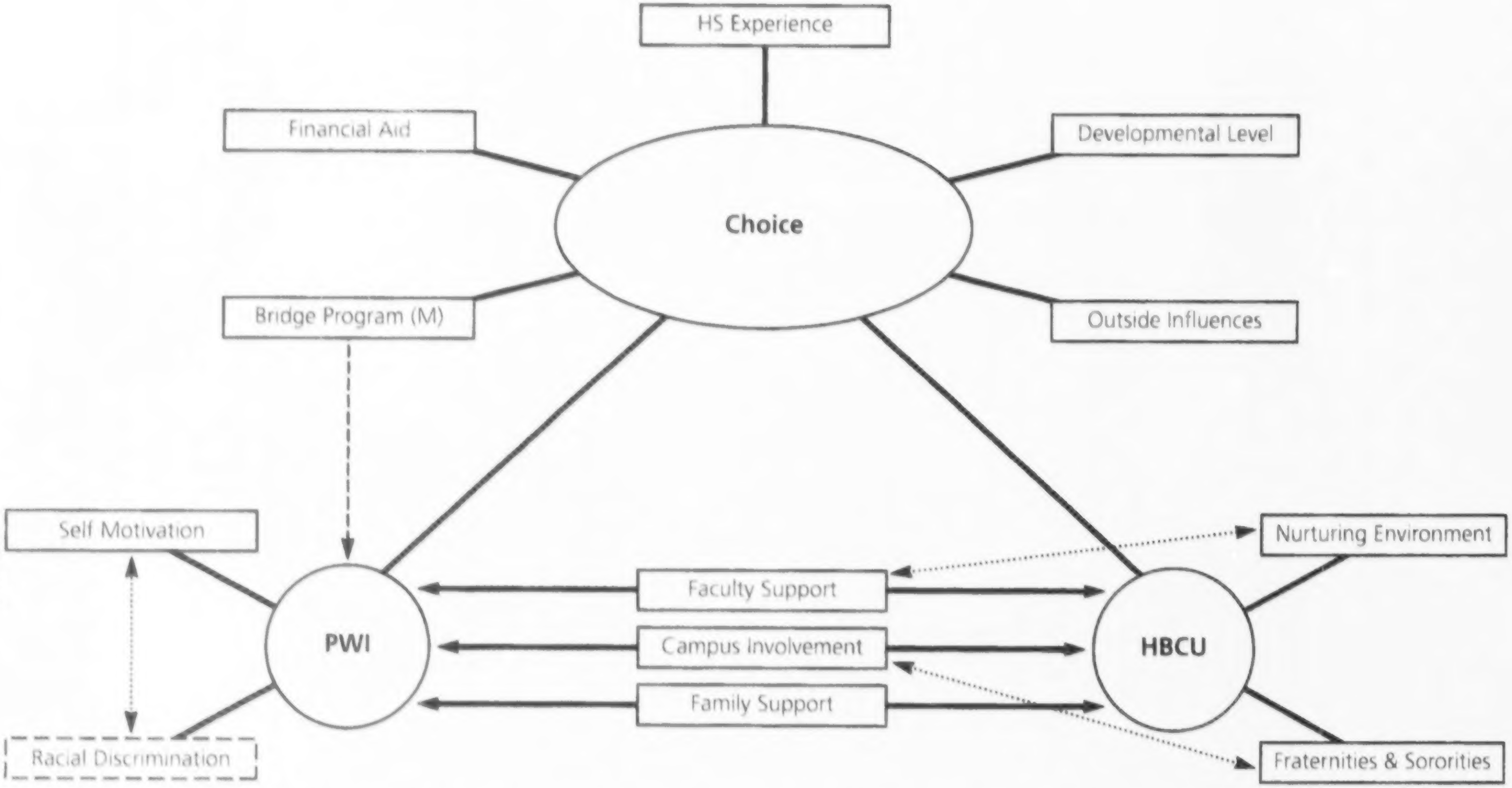
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Several themes emerged from the interview results of this study and revolved around two main areas of foci: factors related to choice and factors related to completing the baccalaureate degree. Figure 27.1 is a conceptual model that illustrates the patterns that emerged from the data and is specific to the racial composition of the institution (i.e., HBCU and PWI). The first thematic category was choice, or factors that impacted the decision to attend a HBCU versus a PWI. The second major category consisted of success factors that contributed to the completion of the baccalaureate degree at both types of institutions. In reference to the first research question in this study, five themes emerged as reasons why participants chose to attend a HBCU versus a PWI: (1) high school experience, (2) level of readiness, (3) financial aid, (4) outside influences, and (5) bridge programs.

High School Experience

High school experience was a theme that emerged in relation to college choice. Throughout the interviews, several of the participants talked about their experience in high school and how it affected their decision to attend a HBCU versus a PWI. For example, one participant who chose to attend a HBCU reported, "I needed more experience being around positive Black people." This participant attended a majority White high school, and grew up in a city that was mostly White. Another participant who chose to attend a PWI reported, "I wanted to be somewhere different...I didn't experience multiculturalism in high school." This particular student attended a high school in an inner city, which consisted of a majority (95%) population of Black students.

One participant who attended a high school that was mixed in terms of racial composition indicated his need for a more nurturing environment;



HS Experience
Financial Aid
Developmental Level
Choice
Bridge Program (M)
Outside Influences
Self Motivation
Nurturing Environment
Faculty Support
PWI
Campus Involvement
HBCU
Family Support
Racial Discrimination
Fraternities & Sororities

Figure 27.1. Navigating the shape of the river: Helping Black students succeed in colleges and universities, a conceptual model.

therefore, he decided to attend a HBCU. Based on the participants' responses, racial composition of the high school they attended seemed to have an influence on college choice. These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that high school experience and culture are related to choosing to attend a HBCU or PWI (Freeman, 1999). It is interesting that racial composition of high school had mixed affects on the participants in this study. For example, the data showed that some participants who attended majority Black high schools were more inclined to try a different kind of environment, but motivated others to remain in a homogeneous environment for college (i.e., HBCU).

Level of Readiness

Closely related to the theme of high school experience was the developmental level of Black students, cognitively and socially, upon entering college. Developmental level refers to the level of readiness of a student to enter college. The participant who chose to attend a HBCU because of its nurturing atmosphere, despite growing up in a homogeneous, predominately Black environment, is an example of how a person's level of readiness can influence college choice. This example may also function inversely. The experience of growing up in a homogeneous environment served as a stimulus for some participants to seek out the opposite type of environment for college. Black students that are raised in environments that expose them to different cultures may be at a different level of readiness and might be able to handle the pressures associated with attending a PWI. To summarize this point, an individual's level of readiness to enter college should be assessed in order to help students make informed decisions about their college choice.

Financial Aid

Financial aid was another theme that emerged from the data in terms of making a decision to attend a HBCU versus a PWI. The majority of the participants who attended PWIs reported that their choice was influenced by the fact that scholarships and other types of financial aid were not available at HBCUs. In other words, these students received better financial aid packages and scholarship opportunities from PWIs. Contrarily, the majority of the participants who attended HBCUs reported that they received scholarships, mostly academic scholarships. The contrast between these results is interesting and warrants further investigation about the dissemination of information on financial aid at HBCUs.

Outside Influences

Outside influences also emerged as a theme from the data. For the most part, the decision of where to go to college was influenced to some degree by what someone else told them about the type of institutions (e.g., guidance counselor, family member, teachers, etc.). The female participants that attended PWIs were influenced by family members not to attend a HBCU. One student indicated, "My mother and other people in my home community advised against going to a historically Black college...they do not represent the real world." For the other student, her grandparents begged her not to attend a HBCU because her father had a bad experience while attending a HBCU. In addition, her grandparents did not think that she was prepared to deal with the dynamics of the southern culture because she was raised on the West Coast. In contrast, some of the participants who attended HBCUs had influence from others to attend a HBCU. One student indicated that his teachers strongly influenced him to attend a HBCU because they felt he needed more nurturing and a safe environment to foster his development.

Bridge Programs

The last theme that emerged in terms of influence on college choice was bridge programs. Both of the Black male participants who attended PWIs were enrolled in summer bridge programs at their respective undergraduate institutions. They indicated that enrollment in the bridge program had a significant impact on their college decision. One participant said that the bridge program helped him with getting to know the faculty on campus, as well as becoming familiar with the campus culture and environment.

HBCU Success Factors

Related to the second research question, two factors were prominent in the success of the participants who attended HBCUs. The first was the notion of being educated in a nurturing environment. All of the participants who attended HBCUs talked about the nurturing quality of the campus environment. This finding is consistent with the results of Allen's (1987) study, which suggested that students who attended HBCUs benefited from nurturing and supportive environments. The second factor, particular to participants who attended HBCUs, was that they were all members of Greek letter organizations during their undergraduate experience. This aspect was unique to the Black participants who attended

HBCUs because none of the participants who attended PWIs had this experience as an undergraduate. This is not to say that Black students who attend PWIs do not become members of Greek letter organizations; however, it does suggest that this might be an experience related to the success of Black students at HBCUs.

PWI Success Factors

Also related to the second research question, two interrelated factors were unique to participants who attended PWIs. The most notable distinction for participants who attended PWIs was the expressed notion of self-motivation. All four participants who attended PWIs mentioned that they were internally driven. This notion of internal motivation contributed to their success as undergraduate students. This was true despite experiencing some form of racial discrimination. Black students at PWIs indicated that experiencing racism on campus and in the classroom served as a motivating factor. In other words, these students set out to prove to professors and their classmates that they could succeed in college.

Common Success Factors

Participants at both types of institutions had three major factors in common that had an impact on the successful completion of the baccalaureate degree. The first and most frequently referenced was faculty support. This factor was indicated in all eight of the participant responses. Degree of support from faculty varied across the participants' responses. For example, one participant referred to a faculty member serving as a "father figure." Another participant talked about how the professors in her major area of study paid her tuition to attend a summer school session and provided housing for her. Others talked about being invited to the homes of professors, as well as spending countless hours chatting with faculty members during and after office hours.

The second success factor related to the responses of participants at both types of institutions was campus involvement. This idea was stated more explicitly in the responses of the Black students who attended PWIs. However, Black students who attended HBCUs talked more about being in a nurturing environment, which stimulated campus involvement. All of the participants who attended HBCUs reported that they became a member of a Black Greek sorority or fraternity as a part of their undergraduate experience. Participants who attended PWIs indicated that they participated in residence life and community service activities. All of the participants indicated campus involvement as a factor contributing to their success as undergraduates; however, the type of campus involvement varied for participants who attended HBCUs versus PWIs.

That last common theme among participants in this study was family support. All eight of the participants indicated that family support had a positive impact on the successful completion of the baccalaureate degree. This finding was interesting, especially after looking at the demographics of the participants in terms of parents' level of education. Only two of the eight participants indicated that one of their parents had at least a bachelor's degree. Therefore, regardless of their parents' lack of college experience, they still received support mainly in the form of encouragement from family members.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The conceptual model, which summarizes the results of this study, can be used to help students make the best college choice, especially in relation to the racial composition of the institution. Based on the assessment of such factors as high school experience, developmental level, and financial aid concerns, individuals can make the choice that best fits their needs as future college students.

Furthermore, once they enter the college the model can also be used as a tool to help Black students successfully matriculate through the completion of their undergraduate degree. Based on the data collected from the eight participants who have completed their baccalaureate degree, encouraging students to become involved in campus activities, establish relationships with the faculty, and maintain family support systems can help future Black students make their experience more successful at both types of institutions.

A number of implications for future research can be drawn from the results of this study. The most obvious implication for future research is that the study should be expanded to incorporate a sample that is representative of the population of Black students in higher education. Studying success factors using a representative sample will help solidify the use of the conceptual model, as well as reveal some other factors that contribute to success that may not have emerged. In addition, institutional type should be taken into account when comparing the outcomes of various PWI and HBCUs. Furthermore, more standard measurements should be developed that are indicative of the experiences of Black students in college. For example, attending church served as a support system for some participants; however, this factor is not included in most standardized measurements of campus involvement. Lastly, further study should be conducted on the impact of attending a HBCU versus a PWI on the lives of Black students after they complete the baccalaureate degree. Examining the relationship between the racial composition of the institution and the career maturity of Black students has the potential to yield important results.

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CHAPTER 28

A DIFFERENT WORLD[1]

The Social and Educational Objectives of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Before and After the *Brown* Decision

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> I started out and went to Tennessee at the age of seventeen to be a sophomore at Fisk University. It was to me an extraordinary experience. I was thrilled to be for the first time among so many people of my own color or rather of such various and extraordinary colors, which I had only glimpsed before, but who it seemed were bound to me by new and exciting and eternal ties. (Du Bois, 1940, p. 24)

When the young W.E.B. Du Bois arrived in Nashville, Tennessee, in September 1885, he knew he was entering "a different world." Fisk University, founded in 1866, was one of the six colleges and universities and 22 secondary schools opened by the Congregationalist's American Missionary Association (AMA) for the freedpeople in the South following the Civil War. Despite their more recent organization, however, the institutions of "higher" education for the formerly enslaved African Americans opened by the AMA, the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church,

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the American Baptist Home Mission Society, All Board of Mission Society of the Presbyterian Church, the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), and other religious denominations, as well as those started by independent, secular groups, had a great deal in common with colleges and universities that were established for southern Whites. When the colleges were opened for the freedpeople, only a small number of students were enrolled in the "collegiate" department. For example, in five of the AMA-sponsored colleges in 1895 (Fisk, Straight University in New Orleans, Talladega College in Alabama, Tillotson College in Austin, Texas, and Tougaloo College in Mississippi), only 63 students were in collegiate departments, out of a total enrollment of 2,253. The vast majority of students were in the elementary, grammar, and preparatory divisions (MacPherson, 1975).

In the segregated colleges and universities for southern Whites during the period from 1850 to 1890, the majority of the students were in the elementary, grammar, and preparatory departments. There were several reasons for this state of affairs, most importantly the absence of public or private secondary schools in the southern states to prepare students for college. One of the major objectives of Black and White southern colleges at the end of the 19th century was to abolish their elementary and preparatory departments to become truly institutions of "higher" education (Geiger, 2000; Heintze, 1985).

This process was made easier for the southern White colleges with the significant increase in the number of public high schools for Whites opened between 1890 and 1910. The U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Education *Reports of the Bureau of Education* (1890, 1910) provided invaluable statistics on the increase in the number of public high schools in the southern states during this period. In Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina, for example, African Americans made up between 45 and 60% of the total population between 1890 and 1910. During that period the number of public high schools for Whites went from 11 to 125 in Mississippi, from 9 to 128 in Alabama, from 8 to 125 in South Carolina, and from 15 to 222 in Georgia. For African Americans, the number of public high schools increased from 1 to 8 in Mississippi, 1 to 11 in Georgia, 1 to 8 in Alabama, and 3 to 4 in South Carolina between 1890 and 1910.

The U.S. Supreme Court in its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision in 1896 sanctioned state laws mandating separation of the races in all public accommodations "from cradle to grave." However, in the case of *Cumming v. Richmond County (Augusta), Georgia Board of Education* in 1898 the Supreme Court decided that although all citizens were equally subject to state tax laws, how these tax funds were to be spent on public services, such as schooling, was to be determined by state officials. Thus if a local school board decided to open a public high school for Whites, but provide only elementary schools for African Americans, as occurred in Augusta, Georgia, in the 1890s, then this was not considered a violation of the Supreme Court's earlier "separate but equal" decision (Patton, 1978). Thus one of the major reasons southern Black colleges were "a different world" in the early decades of the 20th century was that there were still large numbers of students enrolled in their elementary, grammar, and preparatory departments (Heintze, 1985; U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, 1916).

In the absence of public elementary and secondary schools for the Black population, these courses of study were made available at the local Black colleges. Moreover, because Black public and private colleges provided elementary and secondary as well as collegiate education, this meant that they could draw upon "cultural capital" from the local and national Black community as an economic resource. Cultural capital or the sense of group consciousness and collective identity served as the economic resource for educational and other social and cultural institutions founded for the advancement of African Americans as a group. The African American masses and elites were willing to donate time, energy, and financial resources to institutions they considered essential to the formation or maintenance of their cultural identity. When we examine the history of Wilberforce University, Payne College, Allen University, and other colleges founded by Black and predominantly White religious denominations, we find that they were sustained, particularly in their early years, by the financial and other donations from African Americans locally and nationally (Franklin, 2001).

BLACK COLLEGES AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

In the late 19th and early 20th century the courses of study for students enrolled in the collegiate departments at the historically Black colleges and universities were similar to those in historically White institutions because they were preparing these students for careers in one of the professions—teaching, the ministry, law, or medicine. In the field of education, the requirements for receiving teaching certificates were set by the various cities and states, and this in turn defined the curriculum in the local normal schools, colleges, and other teacher-training institutions. In 1886, for example, the state of Mississippi issued new standards and examinations for obtaining teacher certificates. Clarice Campbell and Oscar Rogers reported that:

> while seventy percent of the teachers who took the state examination failed on the first year [1886], those who had been trained at Tougaloo [Univer-

> sity] did very well—even those who had not taken the full normal course.... The performance of the Tougaloo students in the state examinations added to its reputation for thorough training. The school's students were in demand by superintendents in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana. (Campbell & Rogers, 1979, p. 82)

Black and White students who wished to be candidates for the ministry, or those who hoped to enter a law department or a school of medicine, enrolled in the liberal arts or collegiate curriculum in which Latin, Greek, or modern languages, mathematics, sciences, literature, and moral philosophy were the regular fare. But the Black college campus was a different world because of the distinctive musical traditions that developed there almost from the beginning. While virtually all American colleges and universities had student and faculty musical and choral groups, music on Black college campuses from the 1870s reflected the unique African American musical heritage in the United States. The story of the Fisk Jubilee Singers and their fundraising campaigns throughout the United States and Europe beginning in 1871 has become legendary, and it was estimated that they raised over $150,000 for the university by the turn of the century (Richardson, 1980). One result of the success of the Jubilee Singers was that the singing of the Spirituals and Black folk songs became not merely a regular activity among students to entertain themselves and visitors to Black college campuses, but singing troupes were formed on numerous campuses and there was great competition among the students to become members. As late as 1927, Benjamin F. Cox, principal of Charleston's Avery Normal Institute, pointed out that student singing was an essential part of the school's fundraising activities. "Our singing, particularly the singing of Spirituals, attracted our White neighbors as nothing has heretofore. Many tourists visited us this year [1927], some contributing appreciatively to the work. A special group of singers had visited the hotels in Charleston and vicinity and has collected over $300.00" (Drago, 1990, p. 164).

The period 1850 to 1890 witnessed an expansion in the number of institutions of higher education in the United States, and the vast majority of these schools were affiliated with some religious denomination. Whereas the majority of White students attending college were enrolled in single-sex institutions, Black colleges and universities were overwhelmingly coeducational (Geiger, 2000). Although the majority of students in the Black colleges were females who were enrolled in the normal and preparatory departments, the collegiate departments were predominantly male. W.E.B. Du Bois's *College Bred Negro* reported in 1900 that there were 2,272 Black male college graduates, and only 252 Black female graduates. And of the 156 college graduates from all-Black institutions, only 22 were female.

In the 20th century, as these Black colleges began to gradually close their elementary and preparatory departments, the number of Black women enrolled in the collegiate divisions increased, and as a result, the total number of Black female students and graduates was greater than males for every decade except in the 1920s. On predominantly White college campuses, the number of female students did not outnumber the males until the 1970s (Perkins, 1993).

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

While religious services, programs, and courses of study were not distinctive features of Black college life in the 19th or early 20th century, the missionary origins of Black institutions of higher education helped to generate an ethos of service and sacrifice among college-educated African Americans (Anderson, 1988). The emphasis on religion and strict adherence to college rules and regulations gradually began to diminish in the early 20th century, and campus life for Black and White college students came to be dominated by debating societies, literary clubs, intercollegiate athletics, fraternities, sororities, and academic honor societies. However, the gradual pace of change on Black college campuses led to a series of student revolts in the 1920s. Raymond Wolters's *New Negro on Campus: Black College Rebellions of the 1920s* (1975) in many ways documents the rejection by the students of policies and practices that did not reflect college life during the "Jazz Age." While the student protests at Fisk and Howard universities reflected demands for Black control and self-determination on Black college campuses, at Lincoln University and Hampton Institute the failure to provide programs of study at the collegiate level sparked the uprisings. At Hampton the fact that its graduates were unqualified to obtain teaching certificates in many northern and southern states led to the demand that the school make the transition from an "industrial institute" to a fully accredited college and teacher training institution (Wolters, 1975).

Raymond Wolters argued convincingly that "the spirit of W.E.B. Du Bois hovered over the Black college rebellions of the 1920s. The editor of the *Crisis* instigated the confrontations at Fisk University and publicized and celebrated collegiate protest throughout the land" (1975, p. 18). However, by the early 1930s Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, and Langston Hughes gave voice to severe criticisms of student life on Black college campuses and the fact that it had come to be no different than that found at predominantly White colleges and universities.[2]

Du Bois issued his opening salvo at the Howard University commencement in June 1930 in a speech titled "Education and Work." Rather than entering the fields of business and industry, Du Bois noted that

> a disproportionate number of our college-trained students are crowding into teaching and medicine and beginning to swarm into other professions and to form at the threshold of these better-paid jobs, a white-collar proletariat, depending for the their support on an economic foundation which does not yet exist.

Du Bois vehemently criticized what was happening on Black college campuses.

> The average Negro undergraduate has swallowed hook, line, and sinker, the dead bait of the White undergraduate, who, born in the industrial machine, does not have to think, and does not think. Our college man of today is, on the average, a man untouched by real culture. He deliberately surrenders to selfish and silly ideals, swarming into semiprofessional athletics and Greek letter societies, and affecting to despise scholarship and the hard grind of study and research. The greatest meetings of the Negro college year like those of the White college year have become vulgar exhibitions of liquor, extravagance, and fur coats. We have in our colleges a growing mass of stupidity and indifference. (Du Bois, 1973, p. 67)

Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black history and founder of the Association for the Study of Negro Life, fully concurred with Du Bois's diagnosis of the maladies affecting Black college students. In his famous book *The Mis-education of the Negro*, first published in 1933, Woodson declared that "the large majority of the Negroes who have put on the finishing touches of our best colleges are all but worthless in the development of our people." The college courses were dominated by European art, science, and culture, and

> in history, of course, the Negro had no place in this curriculum. He was pictured as a human being of a lower order, unable to subject passion to reason, and therefore useful only when made the hewer of wood and the drawer of water for others.... Taught from books of the same bias, trained by Caucasians of the same prejudice or by Negroes of enslaved minds, one generation of Negro teachers after another have served for no higher purpose than to do what they are told to do. (Woodson, 1933, 1969, pp. 21–23)

While some Black students in the 1920s rose in rebellion against the practice of segregation on their campuses, even in the 1930s a few White presidents of Black colleges still refused to allow African Americans to enter their homes through the front door or guest cottages reserved for

White visitors (except as servants); or to interact with the students on campus on a basis of equality. "Negroes trained under such conditions without protest become downright cowards, and in life will continue as slaves in spite of their nominal emancipation" (p. 27). Poet Langston Hughes, in an article titled "Cowards from Our Colleges," published in the NAACP's *Crisis* Magazine in 1934, made a similar observation after his visits to several campuses. Hughes found that the students submitted to "petty parietal regulations," and refused to protest openly against practices of discrimination and injustice on campus or in the surrounding communities. "American Negroes in the future had best look to the unlettered for their leaders," Hughes concluded, "and expect only cowards from the colleges" (cited in Franklin, 1984, p. 414).

In 1933 in a speech at Fisk University, Du Bois outlined what he believed should be "The Field and Function of the Negro College," and made it clear that it must remain a distinct and different world. In the face of increasing statements and recommendations that we should be "seeking to build not a Negro university but a university," Du Bois challenged this idea and declared emphatically that "there can be no college for Negroes which is not a Negro college and that while an American Negro university, just like a German or a Swiss university, may rightly aspire to a universal culture unhampered by limitations of race and culture, yet it must start on the earth where we sit and not in the skies whither we aspire." Moreover,

> the American Negro problem is and must be the center of the Negro university. It has got to be. You are teaching Negroes. There is no use pretending that you are teaching Chinese or that you are teaching white Americans or that you are teaching citizens of the world. You are teaching American Negroes in 1933, and they are the subjects of a caste system in the Republic of the United States of America and their life problem is primarily this problem of caste. (Du Bois, 1973, pp. 91–92)

Black and White college graduates entered a society in which race, gender, and class defined occupational opportunities. While the vast majority of White male college graduates in the 1930s and 1940s entered careers in business and industry, this was generally not an option available to Black men or Black and White women. The postgraduate employment opportunities for African Americans were narrowly limited to providing specific professional services to other African Americans. Therefore, the social and economic circumstances of Black teachers, lawyers, physicians, ministers, and other college-educated professionals were inextricably tied to those of the Black masses. While World War II opened up many new employment opportunities, this improved situation was aided by the organized protests by African American groups, especially the NAACP, the National Urban League, and the March on Washington movement, led by A. Philip Randolph. It was only after Randolph, the president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, threatened to have thousands of African Americans march on the White House to demand nondiscrimination in the employment practices of national defense industries that President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802. The order banned employment discrimination by the government and defense contractors on the basis of race, creed, color, or national origin, and created the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) to investigate complaints and make recommendations for changes. Although the FEPC went out of existence in 1946, numerous state and municipal FEPCs were formed throughout the country in the postwar period to combat employment discrimination (Garfinkle, 1959; Pfeffer, 1990).

THE COLD WAR AND BLACK HIGHER EDUCATION

The beginning of the Cold War coincided with a renewed preoccupation with the "civil rights" of U.S. citizens victimized by legalized and extra-legal discrimination in voting rights, housing, employment, public accommodations, and education. In the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for the allegiances of the numerous "colored peoples" who were then seeking and obtaining independence from their imperial overseers, the treatment of the colored people in the United States became an issue of international significance. White college students remained subdued in the late 1940s and 1950s, and their professors felt threatened by McCarthyism and campaigns to remove "card-carrying communists" and so-called "fellow travelers" from university faculties. However, with the launching of the modern civil rights movement in 1955 and 1956, Black college campuses were a different world in which social activism became a critical component of the informal curriculum (Dudziak, 2000; Schrecker, 1986).

There still remains a great deal of research to be done on the participation of Black students in the numerous civil rights campaigns of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. While the civil rights activities of members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, formed in 1960, have received some scrutiny by historians, sociologists, and other social scientists, we have much less information on student participation in protests launched in southern and northern Black communities in the 1950s and 1960s (Carson, 1981; Zinn, 1965).

The Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in May 1954 declaring legal segregation in public education unconstitutional led to the desegregation of many historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and White students began to graduate these institutions as early as 1956 (Franklin, 2002). The movement to integrate the student bodies at

HBCUs following the *Brown* decision presented a formidable challenge to the social purposes of Black higher education, and many people began to ask: Is there still a need for predominantly Black colleges and universities? In the introduction to his book *Black Colleges and Universities: Challenges for the Future*, published in 1985, Antoine Garibaldi pointed out that "over the last 25 years...the removal of barriers of racial segregation, greater access to educational opportunities for racial minorities, and the rapid expansion of the higher education system have led many to question the need for the Black colleges and universities." The 15 essays in this volume, and other books devoted to this subject, emphasized the idea that the HBCUs needed to "expand, alter, or reinforce their traditional missions and goals so that they can carve niches for themselves in the American educational system of post secondary-education" (Freeman, 1998, pp. 3–5; Garibaldi, 1984, pp. 3–4; Willie & Edmonds, 1978).

CONCLUSION

At the dawn of the 21st century there is abundant evidence that the HBCUs have carved out specific niches for themselves in American higher education. In a recent article, "Post Secondary Access and Degree Attainment of African Americans," Antoine Garibaldi (2000) found that

> despite the fact that open admissions practices at many public institutions of higher education gradually changes the more traditional pattern of enrollment at HBCUs during the 1960s and 1970s, these institutions still enroll a sizable number of African American students in 1997—and they account for a significant [number] of the undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees awarded to African Americans.

The 101 HBCUs represent less than 5% of the four-year colleges and universities in the United States, however, they award 28% of the baccalaureate degrees to African Americans, and "among the 5,284 African American doctoral degree recipients between 1991 and 1995, 1,122, or 21 percent, of them received their undergraduate degrees at HBCUs" (Garibaldi, 2000, pp. 147–148).

In the late 19th century the southern Black colleges and universities were a different world because Black and White educators, motivated by strong religious commitments, created an environment that nurtured a missionary ethos of service and sacrifice that ultimately became an important part of the personal identities of most "college-bred Negroes." The increasing secularization on these campuses in the early decades of the 20th century spawned a generation of Black college students who took matters into their own hands and demanded changes and improvements in the curriculum and the quality of life on campus. In the 1930s and 1940s Black intellectuals criticized Black colleges for becoming too much like their predominantly White counterparts, and called on college students and faculty members to maintain stronger ties to the lives and circumstances of the African American masses.

The Cold War era brought numerous social and political changes in American society. Following the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision in 1954 and the launching of the modern civil rights movement, Black college campuses became the spawning grounds for civil rights activists. And from the evidence compiled by social scientists and educators in the 1980s and 1990s, the Black college campus remains a different world. The positive and nurturing academic environment that African American students encounter at HBCUs continues to provide the foundations for the professional achievements and community leadership so essential for African American advancement in the 21st century.

NOTES

1. *A Different World* was the title of a television series shown in the late 1980s and early 1990s and produced by comedian Bill Cosby. It was a spin-off from the immensely successful *Cosby Show*, and was set on the campus of the fictional Hillman College, a historically Black college.
2. Langston Hughes wrote this article for the *Crisis* because of his disgust over the failure of the Fisk University students and faculty to protest over the deaths of the popular dean of women, Juliette Derricotte, and a student, Nina Johnson, following an automobile accident. They died after local White officials refused to take them to the nearby Hamilton Memorial Hospital in Dalton, Georgia, because it was "for Whites only."

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CHAPTER 29

WHEN AND WHERE WE ENTER

African American Students' Marginalization in the Context of a Predominantly White Multicultural Education Course

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INTRODUCTION

Although many African American teachers continue to be educated at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Hope, 1993), there are also many African American pre-service teachers who currently attend Predominantly White Colleges and Universities (PWCUs) (Allen, Epps, & Haniff, 1991; Feagin, Vera, & Imani, 1996) and who receive their degrees from these institutions. Plans to recruit and retain African American students and other students of color into teaching are often predicated on a philosophy that the increased presence of ethnically diverse teachers is integral to ensuring the academic and social success of students of color (Sleeter, 2001). More specifically, it may be thought that the presence of

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teachers of color will also encourage White teachers and administrators to engage in productive discussions about the increasing diversity of American society (Price & Valli, 1998), which in turn might lead to individual and social change within the nation's schools. This philosophy trickles down to African American students who enroll in multicultural teacher education courses, since it is often assumed that the presence of these students will support the development and learning of their White, female, middle-class peers (Bollin & Finkel, 1995; Bondy & Ross, 1998). Ironically, in an effort to bring the experiences of people of color into dialogues about effective educational practices for diverse students, African Americans within these courses can find themselves relegated to an existence in the margins. Kumashiro (2000) defines this process of marginalization as a term applied to:

> those groups...that are other than the norm, such as students of color, students from under- or unemployed families, students who are female, or male but not stereotypically "masculine," students who...are perceived to be queer...students with disabilities, students with limited or no English-language proficiency, and students from non-Christian backgrounds. (p. 25)

Marginalization originates in the social realities (Grant & Breese, 1997) of individuals and groups and institutions' classification of those considered to be the other. Race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation—all of these descriptors can be potential tools of marginalization. And, as others have noted (hooks, 1992), acts of marginalization—and centering—are fundamentally about positioning and the perspective of dominant groups regarding the "appropriate" positions for members of marginalized groups. For African American students at PWCUs, marginalization originates in a numerical reality, and as others have noted (Allen et al., 1991; Wallace & Bell, 1999), it is perpetuated within and through the day-to-day interactions that students of color have with other students, faculty, and staff.

The marginalization of African American education majors at PWCUs captures, in part, my own connection to the current research. When I first began teaching multicultural education courses several years ago, I wanted my students to learn about themselves and compare/contrast their knowledge of themselves and their own cultures to their understanding of others' cultures. I also wanted my students to understand the dynamics of power and privilege in United States society, and their role within these dynamics. And, I hoped that students would begin to make connections between a multicultural worldview, a social justice orientation, and the decisions they would make as educators. Each of these goals, however, was complicated by the fact that the majority of my students were White, female, middle-class pre-service teachers who were relatively underprepared when it came to understanding, communicating, and interacting with students from backgrounds and cultures different than their own. In seeking to address the needs of this majority, I often struggled to find ways to effectively teach the two, three, or four African American students who were also participants in the course.

In continuing to teach in universities that were predominantly White, and in serving as an instructor for multicultural teacher education courses that were also predominantly White, I often evaluated my performance by assessing the number of students who I felt had come to a "new place" in their understanding of the topics and issues of the course. Too often, although I felt a special connection to the African American students who took the course, I did not feel that they had learning experiences that brought them to these new places. As I watched them walk out the door at the end of the semester, I felt a palatable uneasiness with my efforts to reach/teach them effectively—not only as one of the few instructors of color they would have, but also as one person responsible for preparing them to face the complexities of teaching and learning in a diverse society.

I include the African American students on whom this chapter is based among those who I wished to more fully engage through my instruction, particularly because they explicitly vocalized their sense of marginalization in informal conversations and in my interviews with them. Anika, for example, described herself as "lucky to be here." In a similar way, Eric questioned the extent to which he even belonged at Midstate, saying, "I always thought it [college] was, like, for nerds. I was like, college? Man, I'm not smart enough to go to college." And, even though she was the most confident of the group (in herself and in her academic abilities), Yalonda also expressed reservations about her belongingness. For Anika, Eric, Yalonda, and the other students with whom I talked, DuBois's (1903) notion of "double consciousness" was very real, and they saw themselves as unlike their White peers.

Clearly, in order to better prepare African American pre-service teachers for teaching diverse students, I needed to understand the situated realities of their experiences from *their* perspective, and I needed to interrogate the ways in which my pedagogical practices served to marginalize or center the African American students who took my course.

METHODS

In this chapter, I explore students' experiences of being marginalized (and/or centered) within their college experiences and within my multicultural education course. In particular, I was interested in engaging those students who would be teachers in interview conversations about what it would "look like" if they were at the center of an education that would prepare them to be culturally relevant in their teaching practice. The primary questions explored in this research were:

1. In what ways do this group of Black students perceive themselves to be centered or marginalized within their college experience?
2. How did instances of marginalization or "centering" evidence themselves within my practice as a multicultural educator during the semester that these students took EDP 433?
3. How did these students discuss what it would "look like" to be centered within their process of learning to be culturally relevant teachers?

The research took place within and around a multicultural education class, EDP 433, Multicultural Education in a Diverse Society, which I taught at Midstate University (a pseudonym). Midstate has an enrollment of approximately 10,000 students, with about 8,500 students coming from within the state. Although 12.9% of the student body is composed of students of color, within the School of Education (the academic unit through which EDP 433 is offered), that percentage is approximately 2%.

EDP 433 is a course that was originally offered by Midstate University in 1990, and has continued to be offered as a part of the Teacher Education program. EDP 433 has eventually come to stress the development of culture as a central concept, the significant ways that group and individual differences shape cognition, and the ways in which an understanding of social and cultural issues can be addressed in students' future professional lives. The emerging focus of the course is consistent with a conception of multicultural education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist (Sleeter & Grant, 1999). This approach to multicultural education utilizes democratic decision making and critical thinking, and is organized around social issues and social activism relevant to the life experiences of students. In particular, this approach to multicultural education emphasizes the importance of empowering students to address issues of "social structural equality and cultural pluralism."

Six self-identified African American students (four female, two male) who had enrolled in EDP 433 in the Fall of 2000 were selected as participants for the research. I initially sent a letter to each of the students that introduced the general focus of the study and asked them to contact me if they were interested in participating in the research (see Table 29.1).

In order to address the research questions of the study, I utilized both structured, open-ended individual interviews and focus group interviews. In these interviews, I adopted a phenomenological approach (Husserl, 1970; Schutz, 1967) and used a style of interviewing that was active, emphasizing "an environment conducive to the production of the range and complexity of meanings that address relevant issues, and not be confined by predetermined agendas" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 16).

Table 29.1. Student Demographic Information

Name	*Hometown Population*	*Age*	*Major*	*Class Standing*	*GPA*
Anika	740,456	21	Elementary Education	Junior	3.56
Eric	101,868	20	Physical Education	Senior	3.24
Hakeem	54,095	21	Graphic Design	Junior	2.77
Jasmine	740,456	22	Elementary Education	Senior	3.36
Tonya	171,782	21	Business Administration/ African American Studies	Junior	3.37
Yalonda	101,868	21	English Education	Junior	2.89

The combination of both active individual interviews and focus group interviews allowed the participants to share both their personal perspectives and experiences, while also providing an opportunity for the participants to build on, affirm, and critique each other's comments (Debose, 1992). The interviews took place between September 2000 and February 2001, were audio taped, and ranged in length from 45 minutes to 150 minutes. The individual interviews focused on (1) students' life experiences prior to their enrollment at Midstate, (2) their decision to enroll at Midstate University, (3) their perceptions of their college experience, and (4) their perceptions of classes that they had taken (excluding my own). The focus group interviews were organized around several guiding questions about students' perceptions of their courses and college experiences and their experiences within and related to taking EDP 433. Specifically, in the first focus group, the student participants were interviewed by two African American graduate students whom I had instructed on focus group interviewing techniques; I conducted the second focus group after the conclusion of the semester. In addition, I kept a journal through which I documented my teaching experiences and reflections, and I collected assignments and other writing that students completed during the fall semester.

My role as a researcher in collecting data for this research mirrored the role I enacted as instructor for the course. My status as "the professor" was an important part of how the participants saw me, but because of my age and status as a junior faculty member, many students perceived me as more able to connect with them, as evidenced by evaluative feedback I obtained at the middle and end of the semester. Additionally, because I had attended a predominantly White university as an undergraduate and graduate student. and had been active in African American student organizations, there were similarities between my experiences and the experiences of the participants. However, my membership on the faculty and differences in life experiences also separated me from the participants in other ways. Therefore, I was both connected to and removed from the students I interviewed both as an insider and outsider (Banks, 1998; Nelson, 1996; O'Connor, 1999).

In order to analyze the data, I used constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to identify data-driven themes (Boyatzis, 1998) related to being centered and marginalized. Using these thematic categories, I alternated between considering the ways that each individual participant's words embodied the themes, and exploring the ways in which the themes cut across individual's experiences.

RESULTS

The Community Context

Understanding the students' perceptions of themselves in context of the university community required an exploration of how students defined the community and the town in which it is situated. Students' ideas about the university were largely shaped by their perception that Coryville, the surrounding rural towns, and Midstate University were resistant to accepting the cultures of people different than themselves. As Jasmine said, the "chilly" racial climate in Coryville was not a "dirty little secret," but rather a particularly important, almost mythical, piece of cultural knowledge shared among White and Black students, faculty, and staff. In fact, several students addressed the significance of "not crossing the bridge into East Coryville" because of its reputation as a center for racist activities.[1]

This flavor of racial intolerance extended into Coryville and the campus of Midstate. As recent evidence of the unease between Coryville community members and members of the African American student community, students discussed several campus incidents involving the detainment of African American students by Coryville police, which culminated in a situation in which police dogs were brought to campus to disperse a large group of African American students congregating after a social event. Although university administrators acknowledged Coryville and Midstate University's adverse racial climate, their attempts to support campus diversity were, for the most part, cosmetic. Examples of their approach included the posting of "diversity quotes" throughout the campus and an increase in the number of social programs oriented toward students of color. Efforts to

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recruit and retain faculty, students, and staff of color were minimally successful—during the two years I was employed at Midstate University, I was one of only two tenure-track African American faculty members in the School of Education. For the students who participated in the current research, I was the only African American professor they'd had outside of their African American Studies coursework.

Like many African American students at other PWCUs, the students who I interviewed reacted to their impressions of the community context by involving themselves in social activities predominated with other African American students. Anika and Bryan, in particular, described the Black student body at Midstate University as "close knit" and a situation where "everyone pretty much knows everybody else." Within the group, Yalonda, Anika, and Eric were members of traditionally Black Greek sororities or fraternities, and Jasmine pledged a Black sorority the semester after taking my course. Additionally, Tonya, Jasmine, and Yalonda discussed being involved in other African American student organizations, and Tonya also volunteered at a nearby community center that served a mostly African American and Hispanic population. Although this group of students may have been marginalized by the wider campus community, they were centered within the context of the various groups to which they belonged and contributed.

Marginalization by Faculty, Coursework, and Peers

While the students' involvement in extracurricular social activities provided them with the benefits of kinship, support, and comfort on a campus that was in many ways actively disconfirming of their experiences and perspectives, the students' academic selves were not similarly supported. In exploring the academic marginality of African American students, it is the students' professors who seemed most responsible for shaping African American students' perception of their academic experiences. Individual professors direct both the way material is taught (what Banks [1999] calls the "knowledge construction process"), and the kinds of formal interactions that are possible between students. In addition, professors also provide a structure for the formal and informal interactions that take place between themselves and their students. Although African American students *do* have agency in determining their relationship to coursework, faculty, and peers, this agency is itself constrained by the professors who teach their courses.

The constraints of this set of relationships were mirrored in the comments students made about their academic experiences with professors. In reference to classroom interactions, Yalonda expressed her frustration at a professor's response to questions she had asked in class:

> ...then there are some teachers who don't like you to be outspoken. They just don't like you to have anything to say to them, you know, because they feel that you're questioning their authority.... If I don't understand it and have a question about it, I'm not questioning your authority, I'm asking for help!

Another common reaction of professors to their African American students was to have difficulty perceiving these students as individuals. For example, Anika discussed one professor's confusion about who she was:

> ...I had to go to him and he's like "your absences are kind of hefty." Okay, there's this other chick in my class, right? She don't ever come and me and her are the only black people in the class, right? So you know I was like, "Are you sure you're not confusing me with somebody else?" Because I've had instances where professors have gotten me confused with other black students that's in the class, and I don't see how. I mean, you know what I'm saying? Since there's only two of us in the class, then there should be no confusion...

The problem this professor had in perceiving Anika as distinct from her other African American classmate is one example of how easily African American students can be marginalized by those who are supposed to be educating them. However, marginalization also occurs when professors pay undue attention to their African American students by placing students in "instructional spotlights." As Eric said, "I'm always the first name they know...from the first day...and it seems like whenever they want to talk about race issues, I'm always the first person that they look at. It pisses me off."

In addition to being marginalized by professors within classroom interactions, students also discussed how professors marginalized them in informal ways. Tonya, for example, relayed a situation in which she received less support from her professor than her White peers:

> Um...it's like they just don't come out and say, you know, racist things. But it's just by some of their actions or things that they do that I can just kinda tell that they are, you know. Um...it's like I had a teacher for English and I was havin' trouble. So I went to her and she just, she never had time for me. But everybody else went to her and she would help them out with their papers and was givin' them, you know. Just givin' them her time....With me, she just never did that and I just don't understand why. There's a lot of people that don't like Midstate just because of that reason...

This experience was etched in Tonya's mind as an example of professors' prejudice and the overall racial climate at Midstate, and was reiterated by other students as well. As Jasmine later said, many of her professors had "an attitude of…it's like, well, you should have gotten it, and if you don't, oh well."

The coursework provided by faculty was also perceived as a potential tool of marginalization. Supported by comments by her peers, Yalonda spoke forcefully about the ways in which the content of a particular course was unrelated to her experience as a Black person:

> Like, right now, I have English 367, and its…fourteenth and fifteenth century English literature. You know me, I ain't got nothing to do with that…I mean, it's something I have to throw myself into because it's about subjects and topics that are totally unrelated to the experience that black people have had or that I've studied…

At this point, Jasmine nodded in agreement and said "sometimes…if it's a class that I'm not interested in, or, like, doesn't really hit me, I'll go in there and I'll be takin' notes, and stuff, you know, like a zombie, just takin' notes and takin' the tests and then I'll walk out of there, and it's like, I haven't learned anything." When asked about courses that they *did* feel interested in and engaged in, Yalonda gave an example of one of her art courses:

> It's about African art, but we're learning a whole lot more than just…African art. We're learning about culture and religion and like, my professor's doin a really good job of like, knocking down a lot of stereotypes and a lot of walls that I had set up about African culture, not that it was like, totally primitive or primitive at all…like I don't know why but for a long time I thought all African religions were kind of like voodoo or whatever. So, like, he's shown us a whole other side to African religion than just, like, voodoo, and voodoo isn't really an African religion at all. So it's like we're learning about how actually the way a people worship a deity or the way that they, uhm, embrace religion is not all that different than what we do.

Generally speaking, students agreed that their African American studies courses were the most interesting and empowering. Tonya, an African American studies minor, said that she was glad that she could take these courses, because she went to an "all-White elementary school and we really didn't learn about anything related to Black people." In reflecting on the similarities between her literature courses in college and those she took in high school, Yalonda illustrated the ways that the secondary and postsecondary curriculum her African American students are exposed to can be disaffirming of the contribution and experiences of African Americans:

> I mean, I guess because all throughout high school, we learn about white folk's literature and white folk's culture and ain't nothing changed when I got to college…I mean, not to sound redundant or like I'm not grateful that I know about…Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, you know, but it's the same thing over and over, you know. It's what we called in our [school] system the "safe" curriculum because you weren't teaching anything too outrageous, but you were like, keeping it with the white folks' kind of things…

Within their courses, students not only identified their professors and the content of their courses as sources of marginalization, but also the academic and social relationships they had with their peers. Although not all of the White students they encountered had, as Tonya said, "issues" with African American students, it was clear that many of their White peers were not sensitive to the ways in which they intentionally or unintentionally marginalized African American students through their own behavior. As a way to name the culturally insensitive behavior of these students, Jasmine talked about the White students in one of her courses as "shady White people." Although this terminology was debated by Eric, who noted that "*anybody* can be shady," Jasmine countered by saying that the White students in her class were *particularly* shady, i.e, racist, and she gave an example in order to better describe what she was talking about:

> …no, they're really shady, right, just openly. I expect—I don't care if you do or don't like me, or if you don't like black people, but you better be polite to me…. Like one time the girl next to me, I didn't know her that well, and we had to use our books for this assignment and I was like, "Can I look off of your book?" or whatever, so we were looking at it together and then…her friend, she didn't have her book, so she just said, "Hey Terry, you can use my book." You know, and I was looking at it and she didn't even say anything to me after that…and there are only three of us [black students] in that class and we all noticed it.

Jasmine's example provoked general consensus among the group about the subtle rudeness and intolerance that many White students expressed toward African American students, and Tonya and Anika hypothesized about the reasons for this intolerance:

> Tonya: Down here it's a little different because we have these Caucasians that come from these hick towns and they're not used to Black people. Like there were a couple girls, they were looking at me like, you know, every time I had something to say in class—
>
> Anika: They look at you like "Uhhhh, what is *she* talking about?"

For the most part, these subtle and not-so-subtle interactions with their White classmates had the effect of silencing the African American students and preventing White students from being challenged to critically examine their behavior. The implicit message received by the African American students was that they should be on the outside, not in the center. Furthermore, it was clear that students' professors did little, if anything, to facilitate different kinds of interactions between White and Black students. Even when the academic interactions of African American students with their White classmates bridged into non-academic areas, the African American students were made objects rather than participants in conversations:

> Anika: I remember when I took my braids out, they [White female students] were just like "Omigod!" They said, "Omigod, you cut off so much hair!" And I was like (sarcastically) "Yeah, I cut off so much of my hair. I really did." And they were just like, "Omigod, it looks sooo different." And then they touch it. I'm like, "Do not touch my hair, okay?" and of course they get offended...

The students interviewed typically responded to White students by interacting with them in nonconfrontational ways, or by simply "going about their business." For example, in reaction to the book-sharing episode that Jasmine related, Eric said:

> ...my thing is if you wanna act the fool, I don't need you. My thing is I don't need you. I don't need anybody. If I didn't bring my book, I might ask to use yours, but if you wanna give it to somebody, I ain't gonna argue. Go ahead and do it. I don't need it and I'll go without a book.

Predictably, both of these reactions had the resulting effect of maintaining students' status at the margins. And, even when students consciously attempted to put themselves at the center of their learning experience, it had negligible effects:

> Jasmine: In my communications 302 class we have a lot of presentations were you teach lessons, and I do mine, they're like African-centered, you know. Cuz I'm the only Black person in there and I feel like, they're kinda, maybe...I'm tryin' to teach them something somehow. Like I taught a lesson the other day about the importance of teaching history because we all want to be El Ed [elementary education] majors...and you know, I didn't learn anything in high school except that Black people were slaves and that Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves,

> and I mean, we have Latino or Asian students, they won't feel connections to this country if all they learn about is that their people were conquered or slaves, or that their country got bombed by the U.S., you know...and it was basically like, I mean, I felt like the other [White] students weren't even paying attention to what I was trying to say...I wonder, like, they want to be elementary teachers? I know they won't be teaching my kids, but I wonder whose kids are they gonna be teaching?

As Feagin et al. (1996) have pointed out, though colleges and universities have been portrayed as acquiescing to the demands of minority students to become more inclusive, and have been characterized as being liberal-minded enclaves of multiculturalism, this is not often played out in the day-to-day experiences of African American students at PWCUs. More often, even when the content of courses is geared toward addressing issues of race, class, gender, and other forms of human diversity, faculty and students at PWCUs are often either unwilling to acknowledge, unable to address, or unaware of how to engage in dialogues that privilege and respect the experiences that African American students bring with them. This was demonstrated by Anika's response to a question I posed as to why she chose not to contribute to a discussion on racism and prejudice in one of her past courses:

> Heather: Why not, I mean why wouldn't you say something?
>
> Anika: Okay, first of all, I was in there one day and the teacher was like, talking about something and she was like, "Well Anika, how would you feel if somebody called you a nigger?"... And I was like, wellll, since *you* just *called* me one, I said, "Well, I would be very upset." Then this boy said, "Well, y'all call us names all the time," I was like, "First of all, who you talking about, y'all?" ..."Well, Black people call us stuff all the time and I don't get mad" and I was like, I'm the only Black person in here and I ain't sayin *nothing* else.

In response to being asked what it was like to be participants in courses that are predominantly White, the participants said unanimously, and in unison, "We're used to it." What they were "used to" was coursework, interactions with faculty, and relationships with White students that reaffirmed their position in the margins. In many ways, students' experiences at Midstate, both socially and academically, typified the experiences of other students who have attained a higher education at a PWCU (Allen et al., 1991);

in numerous ways they received the message that their university was not concerned with understanding their experiences and providing an environment for the positive utilization of those experiences, and students responded accordingly by forming their own rules for surviving and thriving in an often hostile environment.

The Existence of Marginality amidst Best Intentions

In light of the marginalization that African American students at Midstate University faced, I hoped to provide opportunities for these same students to centralize their experiences through being involved in EDP 433. In my own teaching journal, I documented my ongoing internal dialogue about how to best support the learning of White students and students of color within EDP 433. A consistent theme in the journal was the consideration of the question "What do I want students to "get" from my course?" In considering and reconsidering this question, I was both inspired by past African American students who had taken my class and were able to find ways to articulate their experiences and learning for themselves and their classmates, and mindful of the African American students who left EDP 433 appearing to have thought little about how the issues of the course related to their lives. In teaching and interacting with the African American students who took my course, I strove to enact the practices that others have identified as associated with good teaching at the college level (Lowman, 1994). I made conscious and repeated efforts to recognize my students' unique backgrounds, experiences and personalities, and I was wary of inadvertently using a "one-size-fits-all" approach to my interactions with them. I made myself available as much as possible, and I attempted to involve every student in all classroom activities, not just those that seemed relevant to their own ethnic and cultural background (Wallace & Bell, 1996). Consistent with this approach, I used reflective journal assignments, discussions, activities, and cooperative learning strategies within my instruction (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998).

EDP 433 was for the most part discussion based, and as a class, we established ground rules (Gorski, 2000) for the semester that were designed to support an open, honest, and what I termed a "caringly critical" environment for dialogue. It was therefore rewarding when students began to open up, and I attempted to support students who shared their perspectives, while encouraging other, less vocal students to join the conversation. I recognized successes in times when African American students would stay after class or send e-mail messages in order to talk about issues that we had discussed. These impromptu conversations and discussions were important in several ways: They allowed me opportunities to more fully understand the perspectives and experiences of African American students in the class, which in turn facilitated a refocusing of the content of the course such that I could address issues from their perspective. The conversations also provoked a consideration of the ways in which my instruction could address the needs of African American students *and* the White students in the class at the same time.

In other ways, however, there was evidence that I had not been successful in engaging African American students in the content of the course. In the second focus group, I addressed this with several of the African American students who had taken the course. I sought to explore whether my own perceptions of instances of their engagement (or lack of) had been shared by them. One of the first examples the students remembered revealed how much I had been—through all of my best intentions—an instrument that perpetuated their marginality. In one of the first exercises of the semester, I had written several ethnic group categories across the top of the chalkboard, and had asked students to name as many people (not deceased) who were "in the public eye" and who fit within those ethnic group categories. As is usually the case, while there were many European Americans named, across all walks of public life, most of the African and Asian Americans and the Latinos and/or Hispanic Americans (students were unable to name any Native Americans) were sports figures or entertainers. When a White student suggested Tiger Woods as an African American, I suggested that perhaps he could fit "across the top." As Yalonda reflected on this activity, she said:

> I was at the board and someone was like, somebody was like, "Tiger Woods" and I was like...I looked at Dr. Pleasants and she was like, well, we'll just put him on top for right now, and we didn't talk about why, she was just like, we're just gonna put him on top and we're just gonna go ahead...

Yalonda's characterization indicated what I was unable to see from my vantage point as the professor. Despite my commitment to bringing African American students from the margins to the center, I was not able to fully capitalize on an opportunity to deviate from an exercise aimed at White students and create a space for Yalonda and her other African American peers to critically talk about ethnic group designations in a way that privileged their experiences. In reflecting on this experience and on other experiences in which I attempted to address the perspectives of African American students, it became clear that enacting an instructional approach that addressed the experiences of White students and African American students was extremely difficult when the two groups of which I was conscious existed in the same time and space.

Maintaining an instructional perspective that privileged both White students and African American students' perspectives was made more challenging as it became clear that many of the White students were actively resistant to sharing their views on race and ethnicity. Jasmine also identified this in the first focus group interview:

> I find it easy because she [Heather] actually gives you the opportunity to say what you have to say. But what I don't like is that, that everybody doesn't take advantage of it. Like, I feel her class is one of those courses where you can just come in and just lay everything on the table about how you feel, and there'll still be people that's just, like, not gonna be really open to what you have to say…they're looking at me and Yalonda like "Why are you guys always talking"? and I'm like, "Why don't you all ever say anything?"

Jasmine's comments mirrored my own observations about the climate of the classroom, as illustrated by a journal entry about the lack of White students' participation I had written during the semester:

> What should I do????? Just when I thought that some students were beginning to express themselves more freely in class.… There wasn't enough wait time in the world to make those students say what was on their minds. I could definitely feel the emotional/mental brick wall they put up around themselves. I wonder how they see me…I don't think it would be a stretch to think that they have a fair amount of resentment toward me for making them talk about something they think is pretty irrelevant in "today's world."

Jasmine's observation prompted comments from several students, who indicated their agreement with Jasmine about White students' reactions to them. In both of the sections I taught that semester, and in many previous courses, White students often became tight-lipped when race and ethnicity were discussed. In talking with other colleagues teaching similar courses, they noted that it seemed that White students breathed a collective sigh of relief when discussions of race and ethnicity ended. In reflecting on class discussions centered on race and ethnicity, Anika noted:

> I don't think they [White students] were honest, a lot of stuff they weren't honest about, they was like, "I don't want to say this cuz they [African American students] gonna think I'm prejudice"—which I probably would learn that they are eventually anyway, but
>
> Yalonda: Right.
>
> Anika: They don't think they're prejudiced, they don't want to say that they're prejudiced, but their attitudes really are probably. They weren't really honest, I don't think.

In addition to experiencing the oppressive silence that White students created with their refusal to honestly and openly discuss issues of race and ethnicity in large group discussions, African American students also had to contend with active resistance within small-group discussions that took place during the semester. Many of these discussions happened in conversations that I was not privy to. One such conversation took place between Yalonda and a White woman who were working on a group project together:

> Like a couple weeks ago we had a project for Dr. Pleasants. I was the only black chick in my group, so we had to a project on [the invasion of] Normandy, okay...and so I voiced my opinion...I'm gonna tell you right now I didn't like the topic. I was like, "I'll do the work, whatever, and I'll have my part of the presentation but I don't like the topic." And this girl in my group, she just had a problem with me not liking the topic because her grandfather blah, blah, blah; he had got some big award in the war. She just thought it was "really important." And I'm like, that's fine and wonderful, but let's also talk about how my folks served in the war too, but they couldn't be in the same camp as your people. So I was tryin' to let her know that the war and stuff and Normandy or whatever has a different meaning for me than it has for her, and she just couldn't get it. She thought I was being unpatriotic...

In thinking about the attitudes of White students in the class, several students pointed out the uneasiness that White students had when "put on the spot," whether this was in large- or small-group discussions. This seems indicative of White students' unwillingness to place themselves in the margins, to call into question their definition of race issues, and to make their perspectives the subject for scrutiny of those who may or may not agree with them. Jasmine identified this resistance in discussing her experience of interviewing a White man for a class project called "closing the distance," in which students interviewed an individual from a different cultural and/or ethnic background:

> Jasmine: You know those little individual interviews, I asked my guy a bunch of questions, but I didn't think he was being honest with me.
>
> Heather: Why?
>
> Jasmine: I just got that impression because for one thing I had him in another course and he was saying, I heard him saying something to his friend, it was a while ago, he didn't think I remembered it, I should have brought it up, but I didn't, but he was saying something like, well, my beliefs on race are already set, and in my interview he's just mister politically correct, you know I just didn't

feel like he was being completely honest with me, like a lot of questions that I asked, well a lot of questions that I asked were kind of uncomfortable, like I asked if there's a Black woman, an Asian woman, Latino woman, and a Caucasian woman, who would you think is the most beautiful, and you know, he didn't want to answer that (all laugh) but he didn't want to answer that, I mean I guess I could see why he wouldn't want to answer a question like that, but some of the other questions I asked him, I guess I feel like he was kinda telling me, he was sugar coatin' stuff, and I was just like,

Anika: They're scared to hurt your feelings.

Yalonda: Or they didn't want to look stupid.

Yalonda and the other African American students contributed much to the discussions on race, ethnicity, and other topics covered in the class. However, because they, I, and a few White students were the only ones speaking, within the context of 30 other relatively silent White students, the discussion was transformed into a substantiation of White students' perceptions of African Americans as unduly obsessed with racial inequality. Although they were relatively silent during class, many White students voiced this perception in journal entries that were handed in during the course of the semester. In effect, the students exerted a silent control over the classroom dialogue—marginalizing me, the African American students, and any White students who continued to take part in the discussion.

Imagining a Different Reality...Maybe: The Question is Posed

The individual and collective resistance of White students to discussing race and ethnicity is an enduring issue within the literature on multicultural education instruction (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Perry, 2001) and in all likelihood, it will continue to be an issue that merits research and continued dialogue. However, because I was intent on beginning to more fully address the issue of African American students' engagement in courses like EDP 433, I asked the student participants to tell me what they thought the course would be like if they had greater control over my instruction and over the topics discussed in class. Jasmine and Anika responded first:

Jasmine: I know I wish affirmative action had been talked about a little more

Yalonda: We tried.

Anika: They don't, I have another class and they do *not* believe in affirmative action.

Yalonda: Girrrll…

Anika: We talked about it in my English class and the teacher said something about affirmative action, and this man…I was just like, whoa, he said "that is just a free ticket and I don't know why they do affirmative action, I cannot stand that they—my friend was trying to get in this college and they denied him because they had too many Black people" and all this, and I was just like, "Mmmmhhhmm." And I was the only Black, so I was just like, I wasn't sayin' *nothing*…

Jasmine: They really believe that? They really believe that?

Yalonda: Are you surprised?

In this exchange between Jasmine, Anika, and Yalonda, the ways in which a negative classroom experience can inhibit and shape perceptions of one's ability to have a dialogue about a certain issue (affirmative action) is clear. Though I had posed the question in a "what if" scenario, the power of Anika's previous experience in her English class exerted a tremendous influence on the students' willingness to consider the possibility of discussing affirmative action within a class of White students. Even in their absence, the White students that Anika, Yalonda, and Jasmine interacted with during the semester of the course continued to be an influence.

Troubled by the continued subtext of White resistance within our EDP 433 class, I encouraged the student participants to envision a course in which "it was just us" and to tell me how they might like it to be structured so that it was "culturally relevant" (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Yalonda playfully began by saying, "See, well, first of all we'd be havin' barbecue cookouts, bringin' some stories…" and Anika continued by adding that it would be good if I would "talk like, girl yeah, you know, like talk like you are now, like yeah girl, you know what's up, you…" However, after suggesting these alternatives, Anika and Yalonda *again* began to centralize the perspectives and experiences of White students:

Anika: I would want you to do it [encourage Black students to reflect on their experiences with racism] in class so that they could, you know, I mean if we tell them, like, experiences that we've had, so they can learn too from that, you know, I think that would help them too, I don't know, we talked about going to the store and uhm, maybe a White person looking at us while we're shopping, cuz they need to know our experiences, so that they can grow too. You know, I think that would help them too.

Yalonda: Because it could help bring attention to whether or not they do those things, like you know, do they stare at people of other races when they're out? You know, how do they act in an X, Y, Z type of situation? It might be completely different from you know, how we would act, and then they might find themselves maybe really learning more about themselves, like Anika said…

In thinking both about Anika and Yalonda's response to my question, and about the responses of the other students to my idea of placing them at the "center" of my instruction, I was left with more questions than answers. Were students centralizing the learning of their White peers because of the need to be better understood as African Americans, and through that understanding did they hope to become more central to class conversations of race and ethnicity? Had this group of students defined themselves as students such that they were simply more comfortable "in the margins?" Did this group of students perceive themselves as having a well-developed knowledge of the important issues to be addressed within topics related to race and ethnicity, and were therefore more interested in addressing the learning of White students in these areas? What were these students' understandings about race and ethnicity, both in general and in relation to themselves? Exploring and synthesizing answers to these kinds of questions will be important to continued dialogue about the marginalization (and/or centering) of African American students (and other students of color) within the context of predominantly White multicultural education courses.

CONCLUSION

A major objective of multicultural education is the teaching of students so that each child/student gets what he or she needs in order to be a successful learner. Because multicultural education courses are becoming a staple in many teacher education programs at PWCUs, it behooves us to begin to change our thinking about instructing students who take multicultural education courses. We must model for our students a mindset that it is our responsibility to give *each* student what they need in order to better understand themselves and others, and teach those who are different than themselves. What does it mean that these African American students are struggling to center themselves in multicultural education classes and on the campuses of PWCUs? How can teacher educators help center these students? What signs of marginalization should professors be aware of? Although it is true that most Black teachers are prepared at HBCUs, it is important that we address these questions pertaining to the education of African American pre-service teachers who attend predominantly White institutions of higher learning. In doing so, we take the participation of African American students in such courses beyond just being tools for the learning of others, and we begin to actualize the true intent of multicultural education.

NOTE

1. When considering housing options, I was also explicitly warned by a department secretary and several faculty members that I should not look in East Coryville because of the attitudes of the residents toward people of color.

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CHAPTER 30

THE IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING THE NUMBERS OF INDIVIDUALS OF COLOR TO ENHANCE CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

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Although often thought to be the same, program evaluation and research are different. Program evaluation is not research per se, but it belongs to the same family, disciplined inquiry, and the two are quite closely related (Worthen & Sanders, 1973). Though both program evaluation and research are systematic inquiries and use the same methodologies for data collection, either quantitative or qualitative, and analyses and both produce knowledge, they have fundamentally clear differences. In their earlier work, Worthen and Sanders (1973) pointed out these differences. Evaluation is aimed at identifying and determining an object's merit and worth. Indeed, Stufflebeam (2000) suggests that determining merit and worth is the sine qua non of program evaluation. Furthermore, evaluation seeks to provide information that can lead to conclusions that will bring about

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improvements in the object. Research, on the other hand, does not have an explicit purpose to provide information that may bring about improvement, but the focus is upon the determination of causes behind research findings. One of the most critical differences between research and evaluation is the source of the questions. For research, the source of questions stem from the researchers, but for program evaluation, the source of questions should stem from those who have stakes in the evaluated program. Thus, both modes of inquiry seek to produce knowledge, but for different purposes. Evaluation seeks to produce knowledge so that sound decisions can be made. Research seeks to produce knowledge so that sound conclusions can be reached.

Although different and quite similarly at the same time, both modes of inquiry are clearly important. With the purpose of program evaluation to determine the worth and value of programs and to provide information upon which improvements can be made, the field of evaluation is critical and its importance will continue to grow as the value of evaluation is further recognized. Moreover, program evaluation clearly deserves more attention as an area where underrepresentation needs to be addressed. In graduate schools of education and other academic graduate programs, the field of program evaluation is worth considering as a professional and academic path for graduate students, particularly those of color or from traditionally and historically underrepresented groups, that is, African Americans, American Indians, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans. Moreover, program evaluation is an area where the context of culture should be taken seriously into account and should be imbued in the preparation and education of graduate students who might embark upon professional program evaluation.

Some of the current leading figures in the field of program evaluation, such as David Fetterman (1994, 2001), Michael Patton (1997), and Ernest House and Kenneth Howe (2000), call for participatory evaluation procedures and even procedures that are democratic, and in some cases deliberatively so, to ensure that appropriate and critical stakeholders' voices are heard in the evaluation process and a more pluralistic process promoted. There have been, however, seemingly limited discussions as well as clearly insufficient efforts to increase the presence of program evaluators from underrepresented ethnic and racial minority groups. Individuals from those groups are those who could be more culturally responsive regarding the evaluation of programs in which participants from cultures such as African American, American Indian, and various Hispanic or Latino are involved. Moreover, evaluators from such groups are more likely to ensure that in the evaluation process, the voices of such individuals are more clearly heard. African American, Hispanic or Latino, and American Indian populations are, of course, heavily involved in numerous educational and social programs, including those addressed by educational reform. When one looks particularly at the number of programs that involve participants and staff from minority backgrounds, and that are generally located in communities largely populated by people of color, clearly it is critical that those individuals' voices be heard in accurate fashions. Specifically, such programs may have profound and lasting effects on their respective communities. Examples are the various educational and social programs, such as the Edison School projects, Upward Bound, Head Start, Family Resource Centers, and Even Start, which are initiated within and targeted for communities largely populated by individuals of color.

A critical role that professional evaluators of color can play is related to the sociocultural context in which the programs or projects are based. For example, in educational programs, Stevens (2000) pointed out that although evaluators may, and often do, *listen* to what stakeholders say when they collect on-site data from students, teachers, parents, and so on, the crucial question is, do they *hear* what those individuals are saying? Her point is that evaluators should be fully aware and responsive to the participants' and stakeholders' culture, particularly as it relates to and influences the program. A broader representation in the field of evaluation can increase the chances of this occurring on a more regular basis.

Given the more encompassing and pluralistic direction in which program evaluation is heading, the presence of professionally prepared program evaluators from diverse backgrounds seems more critical today. If there are means to accurately determine the number of individuals from underrepresented minority groups who are professionally involved in program evaluation, the obvious hunch is that the numbers would be dismally small. Moreover, regarding those who have received formal graduate education and training in program evaluation, one can further assume that, as for essentially every other academic discipline, the number of minorities is scarce among those formally trained in program evaluation (Frierson, 2001).

We can merely look at the annual numbers of African Americans, American Indians, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans who receive doctorates in the social sciences and research-based educational fields to quickly surmise that the number of individuals of color who might potentially receive formal training in program evaluation is low (see Hoffer et al, 2001) as compared to their proportion in the general population. To maintain a sense of perspective, the proportion is from groups who collectively constitute more than three times that percentage in the overall population. In the social and behavioral sciences, the combined percentage of 2000 doctoral degrees received by those four groups was only 8%. In education fields related to research, the percentage was just 12.3%. Notably, the social sciences and education are the general fields where the majority of professional evaluators are apt to come, and given the continuing disproportion of minority doctoral recipients, their underrepresentation in the field of evaluation will be steadfast unless concerted efforts are made to address the situation.

As mentioned, those individuals who often come from what we term as "minority groups" are heavily represented in programs that consistently undergo evaluation. For example, Title IX programs from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that initially drove the need for extensive evaluation of educational programs are based in numerous minority communities. Title IX programs are just one example of the many programs that exist in which diverse populations are participating. If an aim of program evaluation is to be truly pluralistic as a discipline, then there should be assiduous efforts to ensure the involvement of more individuals from those communities and cultures in the field. Possibly even more important is the need to ensure that the voices and perceptions of those individuals within those programs are accurately heard and represented in the appropriate cultural context.

A diverse range of well-trained individuals within program evaluation can make sure that the appropriate cultural context is taken into account. It is also important to ensure the preparation of nonminority program evaluators who most certainly will be involved in the evaluation of programs whose participants are largely from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations. This is an area where considerable effort needs to be undertaken and schools of education should be at the forefront. Moreover, the current school reform efforts affect significant numbers of students from underrepresented populations, and thus the need for culturally responsive evaluation warrants attention.

NEEDED EFFORTS

As in the field of research, it is widely recognized that there is a clear need to educate and train individuals in its sister field of inquiry, program evaluation (see, e.g., Altschuld, Engle, Cullen, Kim, & Macce, 1994; Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). As there is a clear need to educate individuals in program evaluation, the focus should be on in-depth preparations, not brief exposures. Consequently, individuals should have extensive experiences in the evaluation process through formal education and training. This would be most appropriately gained via graduate programs, and the participation of individuals from underrepresented minority groups should be a purposeful objective.

BARRIERS

A major task should be to inform minority students of the opportunities and excitement that exist related to program evaluation and then recruit them into the evaluation graduate programs. However, a problem that desperately needs to be overcome is the lack of awareness of what evaluation is and the important role it can play in the continued existence and improvement of promising programs and certainly for those programs that can be shown to be successful. Actually, making students aware of what evaluation is is a critical task in general. Few graduate students can discern the difference between evaluation and research. Many will probably suggest that evaluation is just some or another form of applied research. Many will feel that if they have had some statistics or research methodology classes, they can naturally conduct evaluation projects. Of course, for years that was the thinking of many who made forays, which were often unproductive, into evaluation.

Evaluation has evolved into a discipline and should be treated as such. Just as graduate students may specialize in educational statistics, qualitative research methodology, quantitative research methodology, and testing and measurement, there can and should be a specialization in program evaluation in graduate programs within schools of education. Thus, the dissemination of information about the field of evaluation, graduate programs, and career opportunities should occur while ensuring that individuals from underrepresented minority groups are participating.

RECRUITMENT

How can minority students be recruited into graduate evaluation programs? One cannot assume that there is a quick fix or that just because there is a pronouncement that minority students are being sought, then individuals of color will quickly flock to those programs. I am sure that many individuals of color have either experienced or can readily identify with that situation. Moreover and not surprisingly, a compounding problem is that few individuals from underrepresented minority groups are familiar with or have been exposed to the concept of pursuing a graduate program in evaluation. Increasing awareness would be one of the major efforts that need undertaking.

It will even be worth the effort to expose minority undergraduate students to evaluation and opportunities to participate in evaluation projects just as there is an increasing opportunity to provide undergraduate students with more opportunities to participate in research projects. This will allow students to understand the differences between research and evaluation with evaluation focusing on determining worth and merit, in addition to providing information on which program improvements can be made. Additionally, they will learn about the critical role that stakeholders play in the evaluation process. Of course, this exposure and experience should be gained at settings where quality work is occurring to ensure meaningful learning for the students. Such opportunities would possibly lay the groundwork for a flow of individuals seeking graduate programs and advanced degrees related to evaluation. As the increase in research opportunities and programs for minority undergraduate students appears to occur, similar effects may accrue for programs providing exposure and real-life opportunities in evaluation for undergraduate minority students.

A carrot to entice students into evaluation is the accurate concept that a main goal of evaluation is to bring about program improvement, and given the types of program that evaluation is required, resulting improvements could have a positive impact on the social good. If the philosophy that evaluation is committed to improvement is transmitted, rather than that evaluation is essentially about program judgment and assessment per se, one would predict that the interest in program evaluation by individuals from underrepresented minority groups will expand considerably. The sense of giving back or contributing to the community still runs strong in a number of individuals of ethnic minority backgrounds. This is clear in the types of graduate programs that attract significant numbers of minority students such as education, psychology, health fields, social and public policy programs, and so forth.

On the other hand, there are quite likely a number of practicing evaluators from underrepresented minority groups who do not have advanced degrees. At a 1999 National Science Foundation meeting addressing the need for program evaluators, the difficulty in providing training programs for individuals who may be considered nontraditional because of their experiences and economic needs was cited. Such individuals could certainly benefit professionally by having the desired credentials and advanced degree, but the formal training and education is likely to add considerably to the knowledge and skills these individuals can acquire. Support for such individuals to participate effectively in graduate programs should be made available and the graduate programs should seek to accommodate and complement the individual's background and experiences. It is important that the education program be meaningful for such individuals.

Practicing evaluators could probably more readily serve in evaluation positions where they can apply their old and newly acquired skills and knowledge. As graduate students, these individuals might be great candidates to serve in paid positions on evaluation projects on campus or with local or state educational or social agencies, or even with such agencies as the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health and the

U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Defense, while they are completing their degrees or as part of their graduate studies. Or possibly they could provide in-house evaluation of schools of education or university-wide programs.

Practicing evaluators would be a great source to tap prospective doctoral students who could acquire more extensive training in program evaluation and become leaders in the field. A number of minority individuals are in research and evaluation centers at state-wide and local educational agencies. Moreover, our schools contain teachers who may serve as a significant pool of prospective evaluators of educational programs. For example, Stafford Hood, of the College of Education at Arizona State University, is exploring the real prospects of identifying teachers in the Phoenix area who wish to address critical issues in education and who may be interested in pursuing graduate educational training in evaluation that has a culturally responsive orientation. Given the observations at the 2001 annual Relevance of Assessment and Culture in Evaluation Conference in Tempe, those prospects look promising. The participating teachers were from multiracial or ethnic populations and were strongly aware of the need to address the cultural context of the environments of the schools in which they teach. From this group may come future evaluators with backgrounds that will make them particularly effective in responding to the cultural context of a number of programs that they will evaluate.

PREPARATION

Based on preliminary inquiries by the National Science Foundation, there appears to be relatively few formal graduate education programs in evaluation despite the need for professionally educated evaluators. Interestingly, Worthen and colleagues (1997) predict that graduate programs in evaluation are unlikely to expand. The hope here is that their prediction does not hold true. Ironically, although Worthen and colleagues made such a prediction, they noted that the need for more trained program evaluators exist exactly for the list of reasons they enumerated in their chapter on the future of evaluation. They listed, for example, an increase in the opportunity for careers in evaluation, an increasing institutionalization of evaluation, and the burgeoning need for more trained evaluators. They further predicted that this need for more evaluators will result in quick-fix efforts to provide more in-service training of evaluators. Efforts of that type will result in far more failures than any successes that may be rendered.

Despite these signs for increased demands for evaluation needs, the reason Worthen and colleagues (1997) give for their belief of little growth in graduate programs in program evaluation is because of the lack of understanding of the importance of evaluation by university administrators. This, however, should not be true within schools of education. If their predictions are even partially accurate, then it is even more important to redouble efforts to bring about the involvement of minority individuals in program evaluation because under normal circumstances, their access will continue to be limited.

Fortunately, under the leadership of Daniel Stufflebeam, Western Michigan University has initiated what may be the most comprehensive evaluation training program in the country, and efforts at other universities such as the University of Utah, the University of Minnesota, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have undertaken efforts to prepare future program evaluators.

Schools of education can and should play a major role in educating and preparing graduate-trained program evaluators and to increase the number of minorities in program evaluation. An example is the role agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have played in the production of science PhDs from underrepresented minority groups. Granted that with only 1,058, or 6.2%, African American, American Indian, Puerto Rican, and Mexican American doctoral recipients in 2000 out of 17,064 (data provided by Hill, 2001), the overall numbers are less than impressive, but if one perceives that the situation is bad now, just imagine what the situation would be if the NSF and the NIH did not provide support to encourage the enrollment and training of minority PhD students in the sciences through various programs such as the National Institute for General Medical Sciences' Minority Access to Research Careers and the Minority Biomedical Research Support programs or the NSF's Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation or the Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate programs. Of course, one must also mention the U.S. Department of Education's Ronald E. McNair Scholars program as contributing to the effort to produce more underrepresented graduate students. In 1991, only 661 science PhD recipients from the four aforementioned groups were produced and that number represented only 4.2% of the total number of doctoral recipients (from Hill, 2001). Thus, there was a 60% increase compared to the numbers produced 10 years earlier, as well as a 50% proportional gain.

The availability of support often galvanizes the call to action. Training grant programs sponsored by agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education and the NSF can be awarded to doctoral programs that seek to educate, train, and prepare program evaluators, and selected programs should have to ensure and demonstrate that they will enroll a sufficient number or proportion of minority students. In actuality, the NSF is ready to look at providing such support. The question is, who is going to step up to the plate and take advantage of the opportunity. Additionally, minority graduate students with training in evaluation can be targeted for program evaluation internships at their respective campuses. They could participate in evaluation projects as well as out of offices of institutional research where sound evaluation is often needed. These students could also serve as program evaluation interns in offices of research and evaluation at local educational agencies or school districts. Additionally, they could possibly work out of the Department of Education, NSF, and other governmental funding agencies where they might assist and eventually serve as evaluators to projects funded by those agencies.

CONCLUSION

With an increase in the numbers of students from underrepresented populations participating in quality graduate programs in evaluation, a positive outcome would be the production of evaluators who can conduct well-developed evaluation studies or conduct and manage high-quality evaluation projects. These individuals could also hold academic positions and teach program evaluation theory and methodology. Furthermore, such individuals may eventually be additional leaders in the field of evaluation. Ideally, we want individuals who can conduct high-quality evaluation studies and produce knowledge as it relates to evaluation. We need individuals who can function as both academicians and practitioners. Just as important, we need individuals who are culturally aware and responsive to the physical and cultural environments in which many social and educational programs are situated. Those individuals exist in the untapped pool of individuals who initially come from such environments.

Clearly, there is a need for highly trained evaluators. The major problem regarding the lack of individuals from underrepresented minority groups who are pursuing professional careers in evaluation may well be a lack of awareness as it relates to the field and further, the relative low numbers of minorities in graduate programs, period. What is needed, however, is exposure and the opportunity to gain exposure to and experiences in evaluation, further informing individuals of the usefulness and value of evaluation in program development, program improvement would make the field even more attractive and gain greater attention from broader populations.

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CHAPTER 31

PERCENTAGE PLANS IN ADMISSIONS

Redefining Access in American Higher Education in Texas, California, and Florida

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Opponents of affirmative action are active in the courts and state legislatures across America. In several states the legal end of affirmative action in college admissions has led policy makers to implement programs that guarantee admissions to a specific percentage of students from every high school. This chapter analyzes the effectiveness of percentage plans in California and Texas. The chapter also addresses the controversy over merit and the use of standardized tests in the admissions process, and the chapter discusses the use of alternative predictors of college success.

College admissions at many public flagship institutions is complicated by the increasing demand for access from families seeking prestige at affordable prices. Since the middle of the 20th century, colleges have relied on standardized admissions tests, such as the SAT and ACT, to assist them in selecting students from among the thousands of applicants (Lemann, 1999). The persistence of a test score gap between Whites and Blacks has caused some to question the fairness and reliability of these

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standardized tests. For decades those in higher education took the SAT or ACT test score gap between Black and White students as a sign of the inequity in the quality of education at the primary and secondary level (Hanford, 1991; Nettles, Perna, & Millett, 1998). For some, the belief was that the use of affirmative action in college admissions was necessary not only because of the historical discrimination of higher education institutions, but also because of the historical and present discrimination in the provision of adequate K–12 public education. Affirmative action was the only way that the test score gap would not be used to foster the continued disadvantage of Blacks and other minorities. The attack on affirmative action turns this rationale upside down and demands the evaluation of admissions policies that rely heavily on a measurement tool that places African Americans at a disadvantage (Crouse & Trusheim, 1988; Nettles et al., 1998).

CONTROVERSIES OVER STANDARDS AND MERIT

> In fact, the dominance of standardized tests in selection is a relatively recent development. The civil rights revolution, and the introduction of affirmative action programs, occurred at the same time that society was formalizing a "meritocracy" based on education and standardized testing. (Guinier & Sturm, 1996, p. 965)

Since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, there existed a conflict over the role of race in college admissions, based on Title VI and the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, which guarantees equal protection under the law for all regardless of race or ethnicity. Because most selective colleges and universities rely on standardized test scores, admissions policies for these institutions use affirmative action to overcome the disparate impact of standardized tests on minority students. Because of this use of affirmative action to overcome the disparate impact of standardized tests, some believe that affirmative action admits less qualified Blacks while turning away better qualified Whites (D'Souza, 1995; Sowell, 1984; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 1999).

Critics consider that affirmative action in college admissions is a racial preference that clearly violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Public colleges and universities today find either a sense of protection or confusion from the Supreme Court's ruling in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978). In 1976, Alan Bakke filed suit against the University of California at Davis Medical School, claiming that the admission policy discriminated against him because he was White. In a five to four majority, Justices Stevens, Burger, Stewart, Rehnquist, and Powell ruled that the admissions policy of UC-Davis medical school was not permissible under the law because it utilized quotas and set-asides for minority applicants.

On the use of race as a factor in college admissions, Justices Powell, Marshall, Brennan, White, and Blackmun ruled that the use of race was permissible under certain circumstances. The five Justices could not agree upon exactly when the use of race in the college admissions process was permissible. In an opinion written by Justice Brennan and signed by Justices Marshall, White, and Blackmun, he argued that, "Title VI [Civil Rights Act of 1964] prohibits only those uses of racial criteria that would violate the Fourteenth Amendment if employed by a State or its agencies; it does not bar the preferential treatment of racial minorities as a means of remedying past societal discrimination (328)." Justice Powell disagreed with this interpretation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He maintained that remedying past societal discrimination through preferential treatment of racial minorities was not constitutional. Justice Powell believed that racial classifications in college admissions were legal if standardized tests or grading systems were proven to be biased, and he believed that there existed two compelling governmental or institutional interests for the use of racial classifications in college admissions. The first compelling interest was if it was necessary to admit a certain number of a particular group to ensure adequate service to those communities. The second compelling interest was to promote diversity in the student body (*Regents v. Bakke*, 1978).

Today colleges and universities face the challenge of interpreting the splintered decision in *Bakke* because it is the only Supreme Court ruling involving the question of the use of race in college admissions policies. The rulings from *Bakke* made two issues clear: racial quotas and set-asides for specific groups are illegal, and the use of race in college admissions is constitutional under certain circumstances. Many in the higher education and the legal communities accept the first finding from *Bakke* without question. The current legal issues revolve around the second issue: does the use of race in college admissions serve as a compelling institutional interest.

For some time Justice Powell's opinion stood as the legal protection of affirmative action policies in college admissions. In the 1990s this legal protection was weakened as the composition of some federal district courts became more conservative (Masters, 2000). However, the first major defeat for affirmative action in higher education in the 1990s was not won in the courts. In 1995, Pete Wilson, the governor of California, began his campaign for the presidency of the United States. Because of the strong showing of conservative candidates in the 1994 congressional elections, Wilson saw the opportunity for a conservative candidate to regain the presidency from democrats and President Bill Clinton. Wilson made affirmative action a key issue in his campaign strategy. In an attempt to give credibility to his position on affirmative action, Wilson began attacking the policy in his own state. A prime target was the admissions policies of California's most selective institution in the University of California system, the University of California at Berkeley. As governor, Wilson was not only a member of the Board of Regents, but appointed members of the Board as well. He appointed 4 of the 18 appointed Regents. Wilson's predecessor, Republican G. Deukmejian, appointed the other 14 Regents (Pusser, 1999).

With a Republican-dominated Board of Regents, Wilson used the issue of affirmative action in the University of California system to show his political fortitude in ending affirmative action. In July 1995, after a year of debates, protest, and national media attention, the Board of Regents of the University of California system voted 14 to 10 to end affirmative action in the admissions process at its institutions. The attention Wilson brought to the issue of affirmative action helped generate financial support for a ballot initiative in California to end all affirmative action programs by government entities. Before the vote by the Regents to end affirmative action, the supporters of the ballot initiative to end affirmative action failed to obtain the necessary signatures. Following the historic vote by the Regents, the ballot initiative received the necessary 700,000 signatures. In November 1996, 55% of California voters voted for Proposition 209 (Pusser, 1999). Even before Governor Wilson and others were moving to end affirmative action in California, a conservative public-interest law firm in Washington, D.C., was beginning its legal battle against affirmative action in higher education. The Center for Individual Rights (hereafter cited as CIR), on behalf of four White students, filed suit against the University of Texas Law School's affirmative action policy in its admissions process (Diaz, 1997).

In 1996 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit decision in *Hopwood v. Texas* made national news. Cheryl Hopwood, Douglass Carvell, Kenneth Elliott, and David Rogers were rejected in their application to be a part of the 1992 entering class at the University of Texas Law School. Under the admissions policy at the University of Texas Law School, African American and Mexican American applicants with lower LSAT scores and GPAs were admitted. The four applicants, all White residents of Texas, sued claiming the law school's admissions policy violated their rights to equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendments and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (*Hopwood v. Texas*, 1996).

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. The court's ruling was based on the opinion that under the standard of strict scrutiny the goal of creating a diverse learning environment at the law school was not a compelling institutional interest. The court also found that despite enrollment gaps between Blacks and Whites, the University had done enough to remedy its history of racial discrimination and that it was not necessary nor permissible to continue affirmative action policies in admissions (*Hopwood v. Texas*, 1996). This ruling did not directly impact many other institutions because the Fifth Circuit only has jurisdiction in Mississippi, Texas, and Louisiana. The greatest impact of the *Hopwood* decision was to encourage CIR to file similar suits in other states.

PERCENTAGE PLANS

Instead of waiting and hoping for victory in the courts, selective public institutions must reevaluate their admissions policy if they are committed to racial diversity, because any alternative that addresses race directly will come under legal challenge. Few race-neutral admissions policies aimed at maintaining racial diversity have been implemented in higher education. However, several of the first states impacted by the end of affirmative action are taking steps to maintain racial diversity without the use of race in the admissions process. California and Texas are leading the nation in implementing what is referred to as percentage plans or X-percent plans. These plans guarantee a top percentage of graduating students from each high school in the state admission to a public college or university. These alternative admissions policies are seen as a way to maintain diversity after ending affirmative action in these states. The logic of the percentage plans is that because most high schools are racially segregated, guaranteeing admission to a certain percentage of students from every school will bring in students of color regardless of standardized test scores.

Following the *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996) decision, which ended affirmative action in Texas, the state legislature passed a percentage plan. According to the official state website for the Texas Plan, "the legislation that created this admission policy was in response to the *Hopwood v. Texas* court decision. As a result of that decision, criteria on which university admissions decisions are made must be race-neutral" (*Hopwood v. Texas*, 1996). The Top 10 Percent rule (Texas Plan) was created by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and adopted in October 1997. Under the Texas Plan students in the top 10% of their graduating class at public and private high schools receive automatic admission to a public college or university in Texas. Eligible students in Texas can choose which public college or university they wish to attend.

The California percentage plan is called the Eligibility in the Local Context Program (ELC). This program guarantees the top 4% of graduating students in each high school admission to one of the eight University of California schools if they meet academic course requirements. Students are guaranteed admission to one of the University of California schools, but not necessarily the one of choice. The program includes both public and private high schools. In high schools with separate academic programs, ELC eligibility is determined for graduating students from each program. For example, in determining ELC eligibility for a high school with a magnet program, a top 4% is determined for both the general program and the magnet program. According to the ELC website:

> The plan [ELC] was developed to recognize that student achievement is relative to the educational opportunities available at individual schools.... Students deemed eligible through ELC will be guaranteed a place at one of UC's eight undergraduate campuses, though not necessarily the campus of their choice. Students must complete remaining eligibility requirements prior to enrollment. (University of California Office of the President, 2002)

Following the adoption of percentage plans in Texas and California, Florida adopted a similar admissions plan. The Florida plan is called the Talented 20 program and is a part of Governor Jeb Bush's One Florida Plan. The One Florida Plan is aimed at addressing the state's history of legal discrimination in government contracting and college admissions. The Florida Plan is similar to the California plan because students who are eligible do not gain admission to the school of their choice, that decision is based on institutional standards.

All three percentage plans have advantages and apparent disadvantages. The plan in California limits choice and includes an extremely small percentage of graduating students. The plan in Florida includes a significant number of students but fails to give them the ability to select where they enroll. The plan in Texas gives students a choice but only includes a small percentage of students. Another major problem with all three programs is that each state program, as a legal substitute for affirmative action, is based on the continued residential and educational segregation. Only close analysis of the outcomes of the percentage plans will tell if they are effective at maintaining racial diversity, especially at the most selective public institutions.

POLICY OUTCOMES

Percentage plans in Texas, California, and Florida have a brief history, however, it is important to understand the immediate impact of these race-neutral admissions policies. The analysis of these three states will use enrollment data from the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The analysis will focus on first-time freshman enrolled for the stated academic year. The goal of percentage plans is to maintain access for traditionally disadvantaged minority groups without the use of race-based admissions policies. Because of the small number of Native American students in California, Texas, and Florida, the discussion of percentage plans will focus on African Americans and Hispanics.

When analyzing changes in the percentage of African Americans and Hispanics in the first-year cohort, it is necessary to group institutions by admissions selectivity because the more selective an institution is the more significant the loss of race-based admissions. This analysis of enrollment data uses two variables as measures of selectivity: acceptance rate and the percentage of entering first-year students who graduated in the top tenth of their high school class, hereafter referred to as TTHS. Both variables on selectivity are listed by the College Board (2001). Both variables are utilized because both provide significant information about the selectivity of an institution and the academic credentials of enrolled students. Although acceptance rate is often used as a measure of selectivity, it does not provide a complete picture of an institution's selectivity. Acceptance rates are based on the percentage of applicants who are accepted. Comparing a diverse group of institutions, like the ones in Texas, by this one measure ignores other factors, such as size of applicant pool and size of institution. Most importantly, acceptance rates do not take into account the self-selection that takes place among students and their parents. A school's selective reputation may cause more students to not apply, thereby increasing the overall acceptance rate. Looking at the TTHS of an institution gives a clear indication of the academic quality of applicants.

The end of affirmative action in Texas had an affect on the percentage of African American and Hispanic students enrolling at mostly selective public colleges and universities. Of the over 40 public four-year colleges and universities in Texas prior to 1996, 25 enrolled a significant number of both African American and Hispanic students. Of these 25, six experienced a decrease of at least 1 percentage point in the percentage of African American and Hispanic students in the entering first-year class following the repeal of affirmative action in 1996. As Table 31.1 shows, Texas Women's University had the largest decrease in African American and Hispanic students, 9 percentage points from 1996 to 1997. Although the acceptance rate at Texas Women's University is 86%, which only ranks 16 out of 25, the acceptance rate and TTHS at the other six institutions are among the most selective in the state. Four of the six institutions that experienced declines in students of color have the lowest acceptance rates in the state. Both the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A & M University–Commerce accepted less than 63% of applicants. Four of the six institutions that experienced a decline in the percentage of African American and Hispanic students had the highest percentage of TTHS. Nearly half of the first-year students at the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A & M University graduated in the top 10% of their high school class.

Table 31.1. Texas Public Institutions with Highest Decrease in African American and Hispanic Students Following *Hopwood* (1996)

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*1996*	*1997*	*Difference*
Texas Woman's University	40.4%	31.4%	-9.0%
The University of Texas at Austin	18.4%	15.2%	-3.2%
Texas A & M University-Commerce	23.4%	20.4%	-3.0%
Texas Tech University	13.7%	11.5%	-2.2%
Texas A & M University	14.8%	12.7%	-2.1%
University of North Texas	19.5%	18.0%	-1.5%

Following the end of affirmative action in Texas, several institutions did experience increases of more than one percentage point in the percent of African American and Hispanic students enrolled (see Table 31.2). Many of these institutions were among the least selective in the state of Texas. Six of the 10 schools had the highest acceptance rates in the state; University of Texas at El Paso, Prairie View A & M University, University of Texas at San Antonio, and Texas Southern University all had acceptance rates of over 90%. Of the first-year enrollees at Sam Houston State University, Stephen F. Austin State University, Lamar University, Prairie View A & M University, and Texas A & M University–Kingsville, only 15% or less graduated in the top 10% of their high school class. It is likely that some of the increase in the number of African Americans and Hispanics at these 10 institutions was due to the lack of affirmative action at the more selective public colleges and universities in Texas.

Table 31.2. Texas Public Institutions with Highest Increase in African American and Hispanic Students Following *Hopwood* (1996)

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*1996*	*1997*	*Difference*
Texas A & M University-Kingsville	68.7%	76.1%	7.4%
Texas Southern University	88.7%	93.2%	4.5%
Midwestern State University	15.9%	19.7%	3.8%
The University of Texas at Arlington	23.4%	26.8%	3.4%
The University of Texas at San Antonio	48.6%	51.9%	3.3%
Prairie View A & M University	95.3%	98.5%	3.1%

Table 31.2. Texas Public Institutions with Highest Increase in African American and Hispanic Students Following *Hopwood* (1996) (Cont.)

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*1996*	*1997*	*Difference*
The University of Texas at El Paso	72.3%	74.0%	1.8%
Sam Houston State University	27.8%	30.0%	1.9%
Stephen Faustin State University	17.3%	19.0%	1.9%
Lamar University-Beaumont	20.9%	23.0%	2.3%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Analysis by author.

Because the 10-Percent Plan was implemented to regain levels of racial diversity similar to the pre-*Hopwood* era, the effectiveness of the policy is best determined by comparing the most recent enrollment data with pre-*Hopwood* data. As Table 31.3 shows, after the end of affirmative action and the implementation of the 10-Percent Plan, there was little to no change (± 2 percentage points or less) at eight institutions. These eight institutions are a diverse group of institutions representing both selective and nonselective institutions. At the institutions considered the flagships of the Texas public higher education system, the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A & M University, the end of affirmative action and the implementation of the 10-Percent Plan has brought a 2 percentage point decrease in the percent of African Americans and Hispanics in the first-year class.

While African Americans and Hispanics have lost some access to the flagship institutions and they have gained access to nine public institutions (excluding enrollment increases at institutions that were minority serving). Several of these nine institutions are somewhat selective and attract students with high academic credentials. Six of the nine institutions ranked in the top 10 among public institutions with the lowest acceptance rate. Four schools, Midwestern State University, University of Texas at Dallas, University of Texas at Arlington, and the University of North Texas, rank among the top 10 by TTHS.

The implementation of the 10-Percent Plan has helped stymie the significant loss of African American and Hispanic students at public colleges and universities in Texas. However, this race-neutral admissions policy has not increased access and equity for African American and Hispanic students at the flagship institutions, the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A & M University. The 10-Percent Plan allows eligible students to select any of the public institutions in Texas. Either not enough African American and Hispanic students are eligible for the 10-Percent Plan, or eligible African American and Hispanic students are choosing to attend other colleges and universities.

Table 31.3. African American and Hispanic Students at Texas Public Institutions, Before *Hopwood* (1996) and after the 10-Percent Plan (2001)

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*1996*	*2001*	*Difference*
Stephen Faustin State University	17.3%	28.8%	11.5%
Lamar University-Beaumont	20.9%	28.9%	8.0%
Texas A & M University-Commerce	23.4%	31.0%	7.6%
Sul Ross State University	49.3%	55.8%	6.5%
West Texas A & M University	14.2%	20.3%	6.1%
The University of Texas at San Antonio	48.6%	54.3%	5.7%
Texas Southern University	88.7%	93.8%	5.1%
Texas Woman's University	40.4%	44.9%	4.5%
The University of Texas at Dallas	11.4%	15.9%	4.5%
The University of Texas at Arlington	23.4%	27.8%	4.4%
MidWestern State University	15.9%	20.0%	4.0%
The University of Texas at El Paso	72.3%	75.8%	3.5%
Tarleton State University	6.2%	9.0%	2.8%
University of North Texas	19.5%	22.1%	2.6%
Prairie View A & M University	95.3%	97.9%	2.5%
Sam Houston State University	27.8%	29.4%	1.6%
Angelo State University	25.8%	27.4%	1.6%
University of Houston-Downtown	73.0%	74.1%	1.1%
Texas A & M University-Kingsville	68.7%	69.4%	0.7%
University of Houston-University Park	40.2%	40.5%	0.3%
The University of Texas at Austin	18.4%	17.1%	–1.3%
Texas A & M University	14.8%	13.3%	–1.5%
Texas Tech University	13.7%	11.7%	–2.0%
Southwest Texas State University	24.0%	21.1%	–2.9%
Texas A & M University-Corpus Christie	38.0%	34.1%	–3.9%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Analysis by author.

Early evidence suggests that both phenomena are occurring. A study of where first-year students in the class of 2000 attended high school says a lot about the effectiveness of the 10-Percent Plan. When compared to the first-year class of 1996, prior to *Hopwood*, 200 more schools in Texas sent at least one student to the University of Texas at Austin in 2000. These schools were mostly located in predominantly minority communities or rural White communities. It appears that students at these 200 high schools benefited from the 10-Percent Plan (Selingo, 2001). Because these 200 high schools did not even send any student to the University of Texas at Austin prior to *Hopwood*, it is safe to assume that students from these schools needed an admissions policy that compared them to their peers at their school, not better-off students of color from middle- and upper-class communities. Although the 10-Percent Plan appears to have benefited students at these 200 high schools, 700 high schools still fail to send any students to the University of Texas at Austin (Selingo, 2001). It is unclear why students at so many schools have not taken advantage of the 10-Percent Plan to attend the University of Texas at Austin. Based on the data in this study, we can conclude that some of these students simply choose to attend other public institutions in Texas.

As the demographic realities of Texas change, state policymakers must take aggressive actions to ensure access to postsecondary education. If Texas fails to address the lack of access among African Americans and Hispanics, the state as a whole will suffer economically and socially, as the emerging majority is not prepared to contribute to the state's economic health. Before 2010, 40% of Texans will be Hispanic and 11% will be African American ("Closing the Gap," 2000). While the state has nearly a decade to prepare for this significant demographic shift, there is little time to prepare for the demographic shift among those under the age of 18. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 43% of Texans under the age of 18 are Hispanic and 12% are African American.

The analysis of the impact of the repeal of affirmative action and the implementation of a percentage plan in California is based on offers of admission to students. While this data does not tell which students enrolled in each institution, it does show the level of access among racial and ethnic groups. Selectivity of the University of California schools is based on acceptance rate and the percentage of admitted freshman with a high school GPA of 4.0 or above (University of California, 2001). Data on the percentage of students who graduated in the top 10% of their high school class is not available for the University of California institutions.

After the loss of affirmative action in admissions at the University of California schools, the percentage of African Americans and Hispanics in the first-year cohort decreased significantly at the two most selective institutions. The University of California–Berkeley (Berkeley) experienced a decrease of nearly 10 percentage points in the percentage of African Americans and Hispanics in the first-year cohort from 1997 to 1998. Berkeley has the lowest acceptance rate in the University of California system, and the highest percentage of admitted students with high school GPAs of 4.0 or above. The next two campuses affected the most by the repeal of affirmative action were the University of California–Los Angeles (UCLA) and the University of California–San Diego (UC-San Diego). Both of these institutions ranked just below Berkeley in acceptance rate and percent of admitted students with high school GPAs of 4.00 or above.

Table 31.4. California Public Institutions by Change in African American and Hispanic Students Enrollment Following Prop 209 (1997)

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*1997*	*1998*	*Difference*
University of California–Riverside	20.3%	24.3%	4.0%
University of California–Santa Cruz	13.3%	15.5%	2.2%
University of California–Davis	7.3%	9.0%	1.7%
University of California–Irvine	11.8%	13.3%	1.5%
University of California–Santa Barbara	17.1%	17.1%	0.1%
University of California–San Diego	11.6%	9.2%	–2.4%
University of California–Los Angeles	21.0%	13.9%	–7.1%
University of California–Berkeley	20.2%	10.6%	–9.6%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Analysis by author.

Available enrollment data shows the impact of the percentage plan in California on the racial/ethnic composition of the first-year class at the eight University of California institutions. As Table 31.5 shows, the affect of the percentage plan ranged from –6.5 percentage points at UC-Berkeley to 6 percentage points at UC-Riverside. The three institutions that experienced increases greater than 1 percentage point are the least selective institutions in the University of California system. The acceptance rate at UC-Irvine, UC-Riverside, and UC-Santa Cruz are all above 55%. By comparison the acceptance rate at Berkeley and UCLA are below 30%. While 79% and 84% of the admitted students to Berkeley and UCLA had GPAs of 4.0 or above, less than 45% of admitted students to UC-Irvine, UC-Riverside, and UC-Davis had GPAs of 4.0 or above. The percentage of African Americans and Hispanics at the two flagship institutions in California, UCLA and Berkeley, decreased significantly, 5 and 6.5 percentage points respectively.

The implementation of the 4-Percent Plan has not helped stymie loss of African American and Hispanic students at the more selective public colleges and universities in California. At three of the least selective institutions, the percentage plan maintained the same level of racial diversity as

Table 31.5. African American and Hispanic Students at University of California Institutions, before Prop 209 (1997) and after the Percent Plan (2001)

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*1997*	*2001*	*Difference*
University of California–Riverside	20.3%	26.2%	5.9%
University of California–Irvine	11.8%	15.2%	3.3%
University of California–Santa Cruz	13.3%	16.5%	3.3%
University of California–Davis	7.3%	8.7%	1.4%
University of California–Santa Barbara	17.1%	17.7%	0.6%
University of California–San Diego	11.6%	7.7%	–3.9%
University of California–Los Angeles	21.0%	15.8%	–5.2%
University of California–Berkeley	20.2%	13.7%	–6.5%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Analysis by author.

under affirmative action. Only at UC-Riverside has the percentage plan increased access and equity for African American and Hispanic students. The reason for failure of the percentage plan in California is likely attributable to the low percentage guaranteed admissions, 4%. While the 4-Percent Plan has provided students of color at low-performing high schools access to the University of California system, many African American and Hispanic students at integrated or majority White schools do not make the top 4%. Some of these well-qualified students who were previously admissible to Berkeley or UCLA are no longer able to gain admissions. The inability of the 4-Percent Plan to maintain racial diversity at the most selective institutions in California is due to the lack of choice among students. Disadvantaged students of color in schools that do not offer adequate preparation for standardized tests are still unable to meet the institutional qualifications at Berkeley and UCLA.

Analysis of enrollment data in Texas and admissions data in California reveals clearly that the loss of affirmative action in college admissions decreased access of African Americans and Hispanics to the most selective institutions in both states. In California the loss of affirmative action decreased access to all but one of the University of California schools. The implementation of percentage plans in each state helped lessen the impact of the repeal of affirmative action. However, the percentage plans have failed to provide the same level of access to the most selective institutions as race-based admissions. It is important to note that privacy laws in each state affect the effectiveness of both percentage plans. Higher education officials in each state argue that if they knew who the eligible students were they could aggressively recruit the eligible students among traditionally disadvantaged groups (Selingo, 2000). Based on the structure of each percentage plan, the lack of access to eligible students is more likely to affect the institutions in Texas because of the larger percentage guaranteed admissions and the ability of eligible students to attend any public college.

Unlike Texas and California, the percentage plan in Florida did not follow the mandated end to affirmative action. Governor Jeb Bush developed the One Florida Plan as an alternative to affirmative action in college admissions and government contracting and hiring. Because Florida public institutions transitioned directly from affirmative action in college admissions to a percentage plan, there is no in-between period with data showing the effect of either policy on college admissions. Florida consists of eleven public 4-year institutions. The first class of the New College of Florida was 2001, so this institution is not included in the analysis of the One Florida Plan. The flagship institutions of the system are the University of Florida and Florida State University.

The One Florida Plan was the last of the three percentage plans implemented, so data is only available for the first class admitted under the new policy. Following implementation of the One Florida Plan in 2001 the percentage of first-year African American and Hispanic students increased at six schools. However, the results are less clear when analyzing the flagship institutions. The percentage of first-year African American and Hispanic students increased by nearly 5 percent at Florida State University, but decreased by 5.5 percent at the University of Florida (see Table 31.6).

Table 31.6. African American and Hispanic Students at Florida's Institutions, before and after the One Florida Plan, 2000 and 2001

	Percentage of African American and Hispanic Students in First-Year Cohort		
Institution	*2000*	*2001*	*Difference*
Florida State University	19.7%	24.7%	4.9%
University of South Florida	20.1%	23.4%	3.3%
Florida Atlantic University-Boca Raton	26.5%	29.0%	2.6%
The University of West Florida	10.1%	12.6%	2.5%
University of Central Florida	18.1%	19.6%	1.4%
University of North Florida	12.7%	13.4%	0.7%
Florida International University	68.1%	68.0%	–0.1%
Florida Gulf Coast University	11.5%	11.2%	–0.2%
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	98.4%	98.2%	–0.2%
University of Florida	23.4%	17.9%	–5.5%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Analysis by author.

The number of first-year African American and Hispanic students enrolling at Florida State University increased by more than 300 from 2000 to 2001, 76 percent of whom were Hispanic. Almost the reverse occurred at the University of Florida. The number of first-year African American and Hispanic students enrolling at the University of Florida decreased by 485, 74 percent of whom were African American.

It is too early to judge the ability of the One Florida Plan to reach the level of racial diversity achieved during affirmative action at the flagship institutions in Florida. While this percentage plan appears to work for Florida State University, the effect at the University of Florida is negative when compared to the previously used affirmative action policy. The University of Florida is addressing the decreased numbers by implementing policies to supplement the One Florida Plan. The University of Florida will offer automatic admission to students graduating from public high schools in Florida who are in the top 5 percent. This additional effort by the University of Florida may have little success, like the percentage plan in California, because the criteria are so high that many students in the top 5 percent of their graduating class already qualify for admission to the university.

THE ROLE OF THE SAT

> When faced with large numbers of students applying for relatively few spots, admissions officers, unless they are very careful, will give undue weight to the SAT. All UC campuses have tried to ensure that SAT scores are used properly in the admissions process. However, because California's college-age population will grow by 50 percent over the next decade and become even more diverse than it is today, additional steps must be taken now to ensure that test scores are kept in proper perspective. (Atkinson, 2001)

One of the realities of any percentage plan is the negative affect on access to flagship institutions for students of color at better performing public and private schools. Prior to *Hopwood*, high-achieving African American and Hispanic students from top-quality schools were competitive in the admissions process at the flagship institutions in Texas. Under the 10-Percent Plan some of these well-prepared students of color will not gain admissions to the flagship institutions because those schools will have to reserve space for students of color from poor-quality schools who qualify under the 10-Percent Plan. This reality is of great concern to policymakers in Texas who fear that they may be rejecting the students of color most likely to succeed at the state's most competitive institutions.

Concerned that the 10-Percent Plan may lead to an increase in the rate of attrition among African American and Hispanic students, policymakers in Texas have commissioned several studies to find variables that can predict college success better than the SAT I admissions test. One study by the

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board examined how well high school preparation, designated by type of high school degree earned, predicted success in college ("Report on Alternative Admissions," 2000). The study examined more than 176,000 Texas public high school graduates in 1997. The students were separated into three groups based on type of diploma earned: regular diploma (58% of the sample), advanced diploma (22% of sample), and advanced diploma with honors (20% of sample).

The study came to six conclusions about students who take more rigorous high school courses:

1. More likely to have aspirations for a bachelor's degree;
2. More likely to enroll in higher education after graduating from high school;
3. More likely to have a higher first-year college GPA;
4. More likely to be retained from fall to fall; and
5. More likely to persist after two years of college.

Although the authors of the study acknowledge several limitations, such as high school grades are not examined and rigor of high school courses are not known, they believe that future studies of Texas students will support their findings that the rigor of a student's high school curriculum serves as a better predictor of college success. The authors also believe that the use of high school curriculum over standardized tests is more equitable to all students because the type of diploma earned is based on several years of work, not a test taken on a Saturday morning ("Report on Alternative Admissions," 2000).

Researchers are conducting studies to determine good predictors of college success because of the controversy surrounding the SAT. Although there is no agreement as to why, many in higher education accept the fact that the SAT places traditionally disadvantaged groups and low-income students at a disadvantage. Gaston Caperton, president of the College Board, says that the SAT reveals the uneven distribution of quality education (Hoover, 2001). According to Christopher Jencks (1998) standardized tests are the problem because they have five types of biases: labeling bias, content bias, methodological bias, prediction bias, and selection bias. Environment is a major factor in aptitude, which means that such tests place students from environments different than the test designers at a disadvantage (Jencks, 1998).

Scholars and writers on both sides of the issue come back to the cultural bias issue while ignoring a more problematic issue, the continued misuse of standardized test scores in the admissions process. Relying on test scores in the college admissions process is extremely problematic for several reasons. First, because standardized tests are statistical estimates of student ability, there is an error of measurement. According to George Hanford, president of the College Entrance Examination Board (College Board), "The SAT's error of measurement is such that two times out of three, the score a student gets on a particular form, or edition, or the test will be within about 30 points one way or the other of the true score. That phenomenon may seem to suggest that SAT scores aren't all that reliable, but they are pretty reliable—indeed very reliable—for a test" (Hanford, 1991). Pretty reliable to one person may mean unreliable to another.

The predictive validity of the SAT is based on the correlation of SAT scores to freshman grades. Studies by the College Board also focus on the correlation of SAT scores and high school GPA (combined) to freshman GPA. SAT scores alone explain 27% of the variance in freshman grades. High school GPA explains 29% of the variance in freshman grades. While there is only a minor difference in the variance explained by each variable, when high school GPA and SAT scores are combined, the percent of variance explained is 37%. Out of a possible 100%, 37% is neither in the top third nor the bottom third. The predictive validity of high school GPA and SAT is better described as just average. Despite not explaining more than half of the variance in freshman GPA, selective colleges and universities keep a significant number of students of all races out because of a statistical estimate of how they will perform.

It is this average amount of variance in freshman grades explained that has led some to suggest that other alternatives should be examined. Most notable was the suggestion by Atkinson (2001). President Atkinson made two suggestions for college admissions in California: the University require only standardized tests that assess mastery of specific subject areas rather than undefined notions of intelligence, and that all campuses move away from admission processes that use narrowly defined quantitative formulas and instead adopt procedures that look at applicants in a comprehensive, holistic way.

Atkinson's comments are aimed at demphasizing the power of the SAT I exam in college admissions. Atkinson suggests using the SAT II subject tests that measure knowledge of specific areas such as mathematics and writing. Atkinson also suggests the development of a standardized test that is directly related to a high school curriculum. According to Atkinson (2001):

> In the short term, these proposals will not result in earth-shaking changes in determining which students are admitted and which are rejected. In the long term, however, they will help strengthen high school curricula and pedagogy, create a stronger connection between what students accomplish in high school and their likelihood of being admitted to UC, and focus student attention on mastery of subject matter rather than test preparation. These changes will help all students, especially low-income and minority students, determine

> their own educational destinies. And they will lead to greater public confidence in the fairness of the University of California's admissions process.

CONCLUSION

The challenges facing Texas, California, and Florida in their efforts to maintain and increase racial diversity are imposing. Without the use of race in the admissions process, public colleges and universities in Texas, California, and Florida must find ways to admit and enroll more African American and Hispanic students. Currently implemented percentage plans have not proven to be as effective as affirmative action in maintaining access to the more selective institutions in each state. The failure of public higher education in Texas, California, and Florida to provide access and an ethnically diverse learning environment for all college students will have significant economic and social consequences in the future as the majority population shifts from Whites to people of color.

The conservative climate in the United States has caused a loss of progress in the quest for diversity and equality in higher education. In April 2003, the Supreme Court will hear a case on the issue of race-based admissions in higher education. A ruling from the Court is expected in the summer of 2003. If the Court rules that race cannot be used, all states will have to find race-neutral admissions policies that maintain access and provide racial diversity at selective public institutions. Race neutral admissions plans currently in place in Texas, California, and Florida are failing to halt the decline in minority enrollments at selective institutions. Alternative admissions policies aimed at diversity will continue to be analyzed and scrutinized as more information is available. Other states should carefully examine the outcomes of percentage plans before implementing these policies. It is possible that in a segregated society, percentage plans constructed properly could provide adequate access and ethnic diversity. However, the success of any percentage plan is hinged on the continued failure of America to break down the walls of segregation. This conundrum shows that issue of race, access, and diversity remain among the most perplexing social problems facing our nation.

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CHAPTER 32

A CASE FOR RACE CONSCIOUSNESS

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> *I believe that [whites] today, raised white in a racist society, are often ridden with* white solipsism—*not the consciously held* belief *that one race is inherently superior to all others, but a tunnel-vision which simply does not see nonwhite experience or existence as precious or significant, unless in spasmodic, impotent guilt-reflexes, which have little or no long-term, continuing momentum or political usefulness.*
>
> —Rich, 1979, p. 306

> *[W]hen a white man says he's white, . . . the impression that the nonwhite person gets is that* he means more than color.
>
> Malcolm X quoted in Goldman, 1979

Debate over the appropriateness of race-conscious measures has dominated discussions of civil rights law over the past two decades. In the mid-1980s, one could say with confidence that, despite a number of differing justifications and constitutional analyses, the Supreme Court had generally ratified race-conscious programs and policies aimed at ameliorating the continuing social and economic consequences of several centuries of American racism. *Fullilove v. Klutznick* (1980) typified the "consensus" that the Court had reached: despite an absence of agreement on the standard

Surmounting All Odds, pages 745–779
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for constitutional review, a majority of the Court voted to uphold a federal statute requiring that at least ten percent of federal funds granted for local public works projects be used to procure services or purchase supplies from minority businesses (*Fullilove v. Klutznick*, 1980). In light of this decision, as well as the Court's other "affirmative action" cases, federal, state, and local units of government—as well as scores of colleges and universities—continued or adopted programs that earmarked expenditures or "set aside" employment or admissions opportunities for non-Whites.

The muddiness of the Court's opinions never permitted a clear-cut sense of victory for the proponents of race-conscious programs. A normative principle of "colorblindness" runs deep in the American civil rights narratives, from the first Justice Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s hope that his children would be judged by the "content of their character" rather than by the "color of their skin." To the extent colorblindness represents the goal of antidiscrimination law, race-conscious measures must always be defended as temporary and transitional.

The Reagan Administration, through its arguments in court and its judicial appointments, launched an attack on race-conscious policies that achieved its first major success in the Court's 1989 decision in *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.* (1989). In *Croson*, the Court invalidated a Richmond set aside program for minority business enterprises that virtually mirrored the federal program approved nine years earlier in *Fullilove*. Although *Croson* distinguished (and apparently reaffirmed) *Fullilove* by drawing a sharp, if unpersuasive, distinction between race-conscious programs that are adopted by Congress and those adopted by state or local authorities, its language and emotion were grounded in a metaphor of colorblindness. *Fullilove*, it seemed, was vulnerable.

The Court's decision in *Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC* (1990), then, came as somewhat of a surprise. There the Court, in a five to four decision, upheld several explicitly race-conscious policies of the Federal Communications Commission that sought to increase non-White ownership of radio and television stations. Writing for the Court, Justice Brennan—in an act of "turnabout-is-fair-play"—took *Croson* at its word that federal authorities adopting race-conscious policies were entitled to deference not accorded state and local officials (*Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC*, 1990). And it may well have been this federal/state distinction that motivated Justice White to join the prevailing side in both *Croson* (1989) and *Metro Broadcasting* (1990). (One cannot be certain, since White did not write an opinion in either case.) But it is apparent that this distinction carried little weight in the considerations of the other Justices: the majority opinion in *Metro Broadcasting* is largely a replay of the dissents in *Croson*; and the dissents in *Metro Broadcasting* read like the opinions that constitute the majority in *Croson*.

Of course, Justice Brennan's departure from the Court adds further uncertainty about doctrinal developments in this area, including the longevity of *Metro Broadcasting*. Justice Souter's confirmation hearings, in characteristic fashion, do not provide clear answers to how he would vote in cases involving race-conscious measures. At the very least it is safe to say that there is a deep division on the Court about the underlying presuppositions of anti-discrimination law.

I want, in this Article, to consider and critique "colorblindness"—the version of anti-discrimination law adopted by a majority of the Court in *Croson* and by the dissenters in *Metro Broadcasting*. I will not replay the well-worn debate on affirmative action; indeed, in great part I wish to suggest that advocacy for race-conscious programs is more than a call for "affirmative action," as that phrase is usually understood in current political and legal discourse. Nor will I propose a new "mediating principle" (Fiss, 1976) for the equal protection clause that will justify race-conscious measures. My attack on colorblindness is stated more in cognitive and cultural terms; and my defense of color-consciousness is made more in terms of political principle that constitutional argument.

Specifically, I will argue that we are not currently a colorblind society, and that race has a deep social significance that continues to disadvantage Blacks and other Americans of color. While the legal strategy of colorblindness achieved great victories in the past, it has now become an impediment in the struggle to end racial inequality. At the base of racial injustice is a set of assumptions—a way of understanding the world—that so characterizes Blacks as to make persistent inequality seem largely untroubling. A remedial regime predicated on colorblindness will have little influence at this deep level of social and legal consciousness because it cannot adequately challenge White attitudes or recognize a role for Black self-definition. In the pages ahead I will explain and justify this somewhat paradoxical claim that a norm of colorblindness supports racial domination. I will conclude that in order to make progress in ending racial oppression and racism, our political and moral discourse must move from colorblindness to color consciousness, from antidiscrimination to racial justice.

COLORBLINDNESS AND RACE-CONSCIOUSNESS: CLARIFYING THE CATEGORIES

The norm of colorblindness is invariably traced to Justice Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). A typical modern rendering appears in a 1987 report of the Department of Justice that criticizes the use of "effect tests" in the enforcement of civil rights laws: "The non-discrimination principle, simply put, forbids *race-dependent* decisions and conduct. By race-dependent, it is meant decisions and conduct that would have been different but for the race of those benefited or disadvantaged by them" (U.S. Department of Justice 1987). While the constitutional norm of colorblindness applies only to the acts of governments, it is usually deemed an appropriate norm of conduct for most arms-length private transactions as well; and civil rights laws prohibiting race-dependent decisions in employment, contracting, and the sale or rental of real and personal property are hardly controversial.

In the colorblind world, race is an arbitrary factor—one upon which it is doubly unfair to allocate benefits and impose burdens: one's race is neither voluntarily assumed nor capable of change. For nearly all purposes, it is maintained, the race of a person tells us nothing about an individual's capabilities and certainly nothing about her moral worth. Race-consciousness, from this perspective, is disfavored because it assigns a value to what should be a meaningless variable. To categorize on the basis of race is to miss the individual (Peller, 1990).

Adhering to a strategy of colorblindness does not make race a prohibited classification. Violations of the colorblind principle cannot be recognized and remedied without "noticing" the race of the harmed individual or racial group. But, to be true to the model, race-conscious measures must be limited to identified instances of past discrimination (Sullivan, 1986; Hazard, 1987).

The debate over colorblindness and race-consciousness has usually appeared in the cases and literature discussing programs that give preferences in employment or other opportunities to non-Whites. In now familiar terms, advocates of colorblindness characterize affirmative action programs as unjustifiably altering meritocratic standards and requiring a distribution of social goods that reflects the proportionate representation of minority groups in the population as a whole (Abram, 1986).

The presuppositions of supporters of affirmative action may be closer to those of their opponents than is usually recognized. Many advocate "goals" of rough proportional representation upon the claim that since race is, or ought to be, an irrelevant factor in the distribution of the good in question, deviation from proportionate shares is the result either of present discrimination or the continuing effects of past discrimination. That is, the justification for affirmative action programs is usually stated in terms of remedying past and present violations of the colorblind principle. What separates most of the participants in the debate is not so much the goal of colorblindness, but rather differing views about the cause of current inequality and of the efficacy of race-blind or race-conscious remedies in reaching a colorblind future (*Regents of University of California v. Bakke*, 1978).

In this Article, I will use the term "race-consciousness" to apply to more than just "affirmative action" programs intended to help bring about a colorblind world or remedy past discrimination. There are many other situations in which race *qua* race might be seen as relevant to the pursuit of a legitimate and important governmental goal. These include: ensuring the presence of persons of color on juries (*Holland v. Illinois,* 1990); taking race into account in allocating radio and television licenses (*Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC,* 1990); seeking non-Whites to fill positions in social service agencies that deal largely with minority populations; requiring voting rules and districts that improve the chances of electing minority representatives (Voting Rights Act, 1990); fostering integration by adopting race-based school assignment plans and housing programs (*United States v. Starrett City Associates,* 1988); taking measures to integrate police forces (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.,* 1990); adding the works of minority authors to the "literary canon" taught to college students (Ruoff & Ward, 1990); and giving weight to the race of applicants for teaching positions in higher education (Matsuda, 1988). In each of these situations, the race-consciousness of the program may be justified in other than remedial (and colorblind) terms.

THE DIFFERENCE THAT RACE MAKES

We live in a world of racial inequality. In almost every important category, Blacks as a group are worse off than Whites. Compared to Whites, Blacks have higher rates of unemployment, lower family incomes, lower life expectancy, higher rates of infant mortality, higher rates of crime victimization, and higher rates of teenage pregnancies and single-parent households. Blacks are less likely to go to college, and those who matriculate are less likely to graduate. Blacks are underrepresented in the professions, in the academy, and in the national government (Jaynes & Williams, 1989).

Of course there has been progress. Comparing the situation of Blacks half a century ago to their situation today shows a difference that is startling, and even encouraging, although the last decade evidences a slowing progress and some backsliding. But when the comparison is made between Whites and Blacks today, it is impossible to ignore the deep and widening difference that race makes.

To say that race makes a difference means more than simply identifying material disadvantages facing people of color in contemporary America. It also recognizes that race may have an influence on how members of society understand their worlds and each other, and how such understandings may serve to perpetuate racial inequalities in our society. The next two sections pursue these psychological and cultural claims.

Race and Cognition

Race matters. Race is among the first things that one notices about another individual. To be born Black is to know an unchangeable fact about oneself that matters every day. "[I]n my life," wrote W.E.B. DuBois in his autobiography *Dusk of Dawn*, "the chief fact has been race—not so much scientific race, as that deep conviction of myriads of men that congenital differences among the main masses of human beings absolutely condition the individual destiny of every member of a group" (DuBois, 1940, p. 139). To be born White is to be free from confronting one's race on a daily, personal, interaction-by-interaction basis (Freeman, 1988). Being White, it has been said, means not having to think about it. Understandably, White people have a hard time recognizing this difference. Most Blacks have to overcome, when meeting Whites, a set of assumptions older than this nation about one's abilities, one's marriageability, one's sexual desires, and one's morality. Most Whites, when they are being honest with themselves, know that these racial understandings are part of their consciousness.

Race matters with respect to the people we choose to spend time with or marry, the neighborhoods in which we choose to live, the houses of worship we join, our choice of schools for our children, the people for whom we vote, and the people we allow the state to execute. We make guesses about the race of telephone callers we do not know and about persons accused of crimes. While not every decision we make necessarily has a racial component, when race is present it almost invariably influences our judgments. We are intensely—even if subconsciously—race-conscious.

It is common to speak of racial attitudes as being based on "stereotypes"—an incorrect or unthinking generalization applied indiscriminately to individuals simply on the basis of group membership. From this perspective, stereotypes can be overcome by supplying more information about an individual or the group to which that individual belongs.

But this explanation fails to recognize race-consciousness as an entrenched structure of thought that affects how we organize and process information (Hamilton & Trolier, 1986). Social science research suggests that stereotypes serve as powerful heuristics, supplying explanations for events even when evidence supporting non-stereotypical explanations exists (Bodenhausen & Wyer, 1985), and leading us to interpret situations and actions differently when the race of the actors varies (Sager & Schofield, 1980). It is often more likely that our mental schema will influence how we understand new information than it is that the new information will alter our mental schema.

A troubling example can be found in *Larry P. by Lucille P. v. Riles*, a case challenging the use if IQ tests that disproportionately assigned Black children to special classes for the "educable mentally retarded." In discussing the expert testimony presented on the adequacy of the tests, the court of appeals observed:

> Since the 1920s it has been generally known that black persons perform less well than White persons on the standardized intelligence tests. IQ tests had been standardized so that they yielded no bias because of sex. For example, when sample tests yielded different scores for boys and girls, the testing experts assumed such differences were unacceptable and modified the tests so that the curve in the standardized sample for boys and girls was identical. No such modifications on racial grounds has ever been tried. (p.975–976).

The testing companies received two sets of data and chose to act on just one. Their assumptions made one set of data "surprising" and the other "expected" or "natural."

Because cognitive racial categories predispose us to select information that conforms to existing categories and to process information in such a way that it will fit into those categories that are self-justifying and self-reinforcing. And because we adopt racial categories more through a process of cultural absorption than rational construction, we are likely to be unaware of the role that the categories play in the way we perceive the world. As Charles Lawrence (1987) has noted, "racially prejudiced behavior that is actually the product of learned cultural preferences is experienced as a reflection of rational deduction from objective observation, which is nonprejudicial behavior" (p. 339).

Consider two recent incidents at the University of Michigan Law School:

1. During a class discussion of the Bernhard Goetz case, a student commented that New York newspapers helped fan the view that Goetz's actions were a justifiable response of a White person confronted by Black youths in a New York City subway. When it was suggested that there is a vibrant non-White press in New York that discussed the Goetz case in quite different terms, the student responded: "Yes, I know. I am from New York and have read those papers. And they have some very intelligent articles."
2. The law school student newspaper published a column written by a White student calling for the aboliton of a law school program established to provide academic and nonacademic support to non-White students. The program, asserted the student, " implicitly brands every minority student with a scarlet 'D.' I can't believe so many bright people allow themselves to be insulted and stigmatized in such an obnoxious way. . . ." Broadening his attack to reach affirmative action programs in general, he stated: "I see stirrings of resentment everywhere. If a Black student makes a silly classroom comment (and we all

> do), some White students-not racists, mind you-will think in their heart of hearts about affirmative admissions policies" (Goldenberg, 1983, p.3, Column 1).

These examples provide glimpses at the underlying assumptions, the mental filters, through which Whites view and process social data. Why must a White student feel compelled to comment that some articles in non-White periodicals are "intelligent"? Why do "silly classroom comments" by Black students trigger different responses than the silly comments "we all" make?

This deeply imbedded race-consciousness has a distressing effect on discourse between the races. In many ways, Whites and Blacks talk past each other. The stories that African Americans tell about America—stories of racism and exclusion, brutality and mendacity—simply do not ring true to the White mind. Whites have not been trained to hear it and to credit such accounts would be to ask Whites to give up too much of what they "know" about the world. It would also argue in favor of social programs and an alteration in power relations that would fundamentally change the status quo. White versions of substantial progress on racial attitudes are also likely to ring hollow for many Blacks. One might see an equality of missed communication here. But there is actually a great inequality because it is the White version that becomes the "official story" in the dominant culture.

The Power of Definition

In our society, race has not been a benign mode of classification. The designation of one's race has had a double function, both defining social categories and assigning characteristics to members of those categories (Frederickson, 1971). The predominant power of social and cultural definition has, from the start, been exercised by and for Whites.

The theme of invisibility that permeates Black literature portrays White erasure of Black attempts at self-definition (Ellison, 1952; Morrison, 1989; Williams, 1989). Listen to Audre Lorde:

> ... I can recall without counting
> eyes
> canceling me out
> like an unpleasant appointment
> postage due
> stamped in yellow red purple
> any color
> except Black. (Lorde, 1986, pp. 6–7)

Blacks are "invisible" not in the sense that Whites do not see them; they are "invisible" in the sense that Whites see primarily what a White dominant culture has trained them to see (Hook [sic], 1981; Crenshaw, 1988). In a curious yet powerful way, Whites create and reflect a cultural understanding of Blackness that requires little contribution from Blacks. The dominant and dominating story excludes or ignores Black representations of Blackness not out of vindictiveness or animus but because the Black stories simply do not register (Lears, 1985). Robert Berkhofer's description of the process by which Whites understand American Indians applies here: "preconception became conception and conception became fact" (Berkhofer, 1978, p. 71).

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon described the power of definition Whites hold over African-Americans—a power that was used to serve White needs and perpetuate White myths, and whose exercise has drowned out Black attempts at self-definitions:

> I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects.
>
> Sealed in to that crushing objecthood, I turned beseechingly to others. Their attention was a liberation, running over my body suddenly abraded into nonbeing, endowing me once more with an agility that I had thought lost, and by taking me out of the world, restoring me to it. But just as I reached the other side, I stumbled, and the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there, in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye. . . .
>
> "Look at the nigger! . . . Mama, a Negro! . . . Hell, he's getting mad. . . . Take no notice, sir, he does not know that you are as civilized as we. . . ."
>
> My body was given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recolored, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother's arms: Mama, the nigger's going to eat me up. (Fanon, 1967, pp. 113–114).

Continued White ignorance of Blacks and lack of contact in daily life makes White understandings of race difficult to alter. Whites are only dimly aware of how Blacks live or what it means to be Black in America. Despite attempts to bring African American history into the classroom, most Whites do not understand the role of Black slavery in the economic development of the United States, nor are they familiar with major trends in Black political and social thought, or even the contributions of Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, and Malcolm X. Absence of knowledge is compounded by physical and social segregation (Massey & Denton, 1989). Blacks and Whites rarely get to know each other in neighborhoods, schools, or churches; and interracial friendships remain surprisingly rare. As a result, most of what a White person in America knows about Blacks is likely to have been learned from White family friends, or the White-dominated media.

That the White-created image of African Americans should remain largely unchallenged by Black conceptions is troubling not only because the White version reflects stereotypes, myths, and half-truths, but also because of the role the White definition plays in explaining the historical treatment and current condition of Blacks. Given strong incentives to absolve Whites and blame Blacks for existing social and economic inequalities, the White story about Blacks has never been flattering. As Kimberle Crenshaw has powerfully argued, when the White image of Blacks is combined with other American stories—such as equality of opportunity—it becomes "difficult for Whites to see the Black situation as illegitimate or unnecessary." It works this way:

> Believing both that Blacks are inferior and that the economy impartially rewards the superior over the inferior, Whites see that most Blacks are indeed worse off than Whites are, which reinforces their sense that the market is operating "fairly and impartially"; those who should logically be on the bottom are on the bottom. This strengthening of Whites' belief in the system in turn reinforces their beliefs that Blacks are *indeed* inferior. After all, equal opportunity *is* the rule, and the market *is* an impartial judge; if Blacks are on the bottom, it must reflect their relative inferiority. (Crenshaw, 1988, p. 1380)

In sum, racial inequality has many faces. Social and economic statistics paint a clear and distressing picture of the differences among racial groups. Yet other inequalities are less obvious, based on nearly inaccessible and usually unchallenged assumptions that hide power and explain away domination. The next section examines alternative legal responses to this complex web of inequalities based on race.

LEGAL STRATEGIES OF COLORBLINDNESS AND RACE-CONSCIOUSNESS IN A COLOR-CONSCIOUS WORLD

In past terms, the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of a race-conscious program aimed at overcoming entrenched racial inequality in a particular economic context. The first, adopted by Richmond, Virginia, provided a set aside for minority businesses competing for city contracts (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989); the second, promulgated by the Federal Communications Commission, sought to increase the number of minority-owned radio and television stations (*Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC,* 1990).

In 1983 the City Council of Richmond, Virginia took notice of one small aspect of racial inequality. In previous years, the city had paid millions of dollars to contractors to undertake public construction projects. Yet in a city in which Blacks constitute about fifty percent of the population, less than one percent of the public funds spent by Richmond went to general contracting companies owned by Blacks and other non-White groups. In 1980 the Supreme Court had upheld a federal program aimed at directing public funds to nonmajority-owned contractors (*Fullilove & Klutznick,* 1980), and a number of states and cities around the country had by that time also adopted similar set aside programs for minority-owned enterprises (Days, 1987). The Richmond City Council decided to follow suit and adopted an ordinance requiring contractors awarded city contracts to ensure that thirty percent of the city funds go to Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) engaged as subcontractors for the projects. Contractors should obtain a waiver of the set-aside requirement from the City's Department of General Services, but only upon a showing that "every feasible attempt ha[d] been made to comply" and that qualified MBEs were "unavailable or unwilling to participate in the contract" (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson,* 1989). The program lasted only five years, and it had expired before the case testing its constitutionality reached the Supreme Court.

One need have only the dimmest idea of American history to have a sense of why African Americans were underrepresented in the construction industry in Richmond, Virginia. Two hundred and fifty years of slavery were followed by four score years of legally enforced subordination of Blacks. Jim Crow unionism and social norms about what kind of work was "appropriate" for African Americans kept Blacks in the lowest status, least remunerative jobs, and denied them the chance to move up the occupational ladder. For more than a decade after the *Brown* (1954) decision, Richmond tenaciously fought desegregation of its schools (*School Board v. State Board of Education,* 1972). In 1966, the Supreme Court struck down Virginia's poll tax, a levy "born of a desire to disenfranchise the Negro" (*Harper v. Virginia Board of Education,* 1966, p. 666). One year later, the Court invalidated Virginia's antimiscegenation law, which the State's highest court defended as a reasonable regulation intended to prevent the "mongrelization" of the races (*Loving v. Virginia,* 1967). When Black political strength in the city grew following passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, Richmond attempted to annex neighboring White areas in order to dilute Black voting power (*City of Richmond v. United States,* 1975). The cumulative impact of such public and private discrimination seriously disadvantaged Blacks seeking entry into economic spheres by making it difficult for them to accumulate capital, contacts, and experience (Fullilove & Klutznick, 1980).

The FCC policies, too, were aimed at non-White entrepreneurs, but the justifications used by the FCC for the race-conscious measures were quite distinct from those offered in support of the Richmond set-aside program. In the mid-1970s, minorities owned less than one percent of the television and radio stations in the United States. Concerned about the lack of broadcast diversity, the Commission established a task force on minority ownership and conducted a conference on ownership policies. The investigations of the task force culminated in a 1978 *Statement of Policy on Minority Ownership of Broadcasting Facilities*, in which it announced the adoption of several measures to increase the number of minority-owned stations.[1] The Commission based its new policies upon its conclusion that:

> [T]he views of racial minorities continue to be inadequately represented in the broadcast media. This situation is detrimental not only to the minority audience but to all of the viewing and listening public. Adequate representation of minority viewpoints in programming serves not only the needs and interests of the minority community but also enriches and educates the non-minority audience. (1978, pp. 980–81)

In 1986, following judicial invalidation of an FCC policy that gave "enhancement credits" to women owners in comparative license proceedings (*Steele v. FCC*, 1985), the FCC announced that it would reconsider its racial, ethnic, and gender preference policies. Congress prevented completion of the FCC's new study, however, by prohibiting the Commission from spending any appropriated funds on the re-examination or alteration of its minority ownership policies (Continuing Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1988, 1988). The Senate report on the legislation noted that "[t]he Congress has expressed its support for such policies in the past and has found that promoting diversity of ownership of broadcast properties satisfies important public policy goals" (Senate Report 182, 1987, p. 76). Congress has twice extended the ban on using appropriated funds for reexamination of the policies.

When a city council attempts to overcome some of its city's history, to move toward erasing the gross disparity in grant awards by directing funds towards a group singled out and subordinated because of its race for almost four hundred years, to provide the means by which African-Americans can begin the economic development promised but denied during Reconstruction, to say to Blacks that the city recognizes the harms inflicted on Blacks as Blacks by White supremacy and White economic and political power, how should race discrimination law respond? When a federal agency, following intensive study, concludes that non-White programming is significantly underrepresented on American airwaves, and that such underrepresentation harms both minority and majority consumers, and Congress—also of the view that broadcasting diversity is in the public interest—three times instructs the FCC not to alter its racial, ethnic, and gender preference policies, how should race discrimination law respond?

COLORBLINDNESS AND ANTIDISCRIMINATION LAW

One response is that if past categorization based on race has created the problem, then the best solution might simply be to now forbid categorization altogether. Justice Scalia suggests this colorblind approach in his opinion in *Croson*: "The difficulty of overcoming the effects of past discrimination is as nothing compared with the difficulty of eradicating from our society the source of those effects, which is the tendency—fatal to a nation such as ours—to classify and judge men and women on the basis of . . . the color of their skin" (Van Alstyne, 1979, p. 809).

The allure of colorblindness is strong. It is rooted in the dissenting opinion of the case that ratified American apartheid (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896). And it fits with liberal, individualistic principles that each person should be assessed individual merits, not upon the basis of group membership. Color-consciousness, under this account, is irrational and immoral because it is so rarely relevant to acceptable purposes.

Colorblindness also has powerful strategic appeal. In a world of White supremacy, most classifications based on race will have the intent or effect of harming Blacks. Colorblindness sweeps these away. Furthermore, since Whites are likely to look after their own, insisting that Blacks get precisely what Whites get will materially advance Black interests. Colorblindness also keeps White guilt and anxiety at an acceptable level. As Alan Freeman has noted, colorblindness designates as "wrongdoers" only those "racists" who continue to take race into account; colorblind Whites are absolved even if they continue to benefit from an unequal state of affairs. Finally, there is the risk that noticing race, even for a "benign" purpose, will only serve to affirm the view of racial differences that supported racial domination in the past.[2]

The opinions in *Croson* and *Metro Broadcasting* show that four Justices believe that colorblindness should be the animating vision for antidiscrimination law. Justice O'Connor's plurality opinion in *Croson* identifies the central constitutional norm as prohibition of the use of racial classifications:

> The Richmond Plan denies certain citizens the opportunity to compete for a fixed percentage of public contracts based solely upon their race. To whatever racial group these citizens belong, their "personal rights" to be treated with equal dignity and respect are implicated by a rigid rule erecting race as the sole criterion in an aspect of public decisionmaking. (1989, p. 712)

The concurring opinions of Justices Scalia and Kennedy are equally explicit. Justice Scalia writes: "I share the view expressed by Alexander Bickel that ". . .discrimination on the basis of race is illegal, immoral, unconstitutional, inherently wrong, and destructive of democratic society'" (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989, p. 735). Justice Kennedy agrees: "The moral imperative of racial neutrality is the driving force of the Equal Protection Clause" (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989, p. 734).

The Justices adopting a colorblind approach do not suggest that the Constitution prohibits all racial classifications; their invocation of "strict scrutiny" review leaves them space to uphold race-conscious measures that remedy violations of the colorblind principle or, perhaps, when the use of race is necessary in responding to a "social emergency" such as a prison race riot (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989, p. 735). To allow other justifications for color-conscious state action, however, would undermine, in Justice O'Connor's words, "[t]he dream of a Nation of equal citizens in a society where race is irrelevant to personal opportunity and achievement" (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989, p. 727).

Justice O'Connor's opinion captures the essence of a colorblind approach: equality as a personal, individual right to equal opportunity, and race-consciousness as an irrational impediment to the creation of a just society. In the same stroke that O'Connor condemns race-consciousness as a serious violation of fundamental American norms, she promises us that colorblindness is the road to the future we all seek. Those who attack colorblindness, therefore, are put in the position of arguing for an approach that rings false to widely held norms and also moves us away from our utopian ideal. Here is the power of a dominant legal consciousness. It supports the legitimacy of the current set of norms both by privileging certain accounts of the way the world is and by promising a better world tomorrow.

FROM COLORBLINDNESS TO RACE-CONSCIOUSNESS

Colorblindness may seem to be a sensible strategy in a world in which race has unjustly mattered for so long. Yet the claim that colorblindness today is the most efficacious route to colorblindness tomorrow has always been controversial. Justice Blackmun's paradoxical aphorism in *Bakke* reflects the usual counterclaim: "In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way. And in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently" (*Regents of University of California v. Bakke*, 1978, p. 407). To those who agree with Blackmun, the invalidation of Richmond's set-aside program in *Croson* amply demonstrates how a demand for means that are colorblind will retard the remedying of racial inequality.

The claim I wish to press here is different from Blackmun's familiar stance in the affirmative action debate. I will argue in this section that a legal norm of colorblindness will not end race-consciousness; rather, it will simply make the unfortunate aspects and consequences of race-consciousness less accessible and thus less alterable. Furthermore, colorblind strategies are likely to deny or fail to appreciate the contribution that race-consciousness can make in creating new cultural narratives that would support serious efforts aimed at achieving racial justice.

Before these claims can be made, however, two varieties of colorblindness should be distinguished. The first, which I will call "strong colorblindness," argues that race should truly be an irrelevant, virtually unnoticed, human characteristic. Richard Wasserstrom has described this "assimilationist ideal":

> [A] nonracist society would be one in which the race of an individual would be the functional equivalent of the eye color of individuals in our society today. In our society no basic political rights and obligations are determined on the basis of eye color. No important institutional benefits and burdens are connected with eye color. Indeed, except for the mildest sort of aesthetic preferences, a person would be thought odd who even made private, social decisions by taking eye color into account. (Wasserstrom, 1980, p. 47)

The second type, "weak colorblindness," would not outlaw all recognition of race, but would condemn the use of race as a basis for the distribution of scarce resources or opportunities and the imposition of burdens. Under "weak colorblindness," race might function like ethnicity: an attribute that could have significance for group members, and one that society as a whole could recognize, but not one upon which legal distinctions could be based. Furthermore, individuals would be able to choose how important a role race would play in their associations and identifications, but their race would not be used by others to limit their opportunities or define their identities. Thus, college courses on "African-American literature" might well be permissible under a weak colorblindness regime, but such a regime would not tolerate allocating places in the class based on race or allowing race to be used as a factor in the choice of an instructor. In the sections that follow, I will argue that strong colorblindness is impossible and undesirable, and that weak colorblindness—although perhaps able to be implemented as a legal strategy—is an inadequate response to current manifestations of racial inequality.

Masking Race-Consciousness

It is apparently important, as a matter of widespread cultural practice, for Whites to assert that they are strongly colorblind, in the sense that they do not notice or act on the basis of race. One can see this at work in such statements as: "I judge each person as an individual." Of course, it cannot be said that Whites do not notice the race of others. Perhaps what is being said is that the speaker does not begin her evaluation with any preconceived notions. But this too is difficult to believe, given the deep and implicit ways in which our minds are color-coded. To be truly colorblind in this way, as David Strauss has shown, requires color-consciousness: one must notice race in order to tell oneself not to trigger the usual mental processes that take race into account (Strauss, 1986).

The denial of race-consciousness occasioned by the desire to be strongly colorblind is described in a recent study of a desegregated junior high school by psychologist Janet Schofield (1986). She reports that teachers, apparently concerned that acknowledging racial awareness would be viewed as a sign of prejudice, claimed not to notice the race of their students. In pursuit of colorblindness, teachers rarely used the words "White" or "Black," and avoided racial topics and identifications in class.

This act of denial is troubling not only because it distorts reality, but also because it will make less accessible the ways in which color-consciousness influences our understanding of the world and of others. Strong colorblindness will perpetuate the White image of Blacks by rendering irrelevant the kind of race-based discussion and data necessary for a serious critique of White definitions. Schofield's study documents how teachers' desires to act in a colorblind fashion harmed the educational experience by ignoring or denying race when it would have been appropriate to notice it:

> [One] teacher included George Washington Carver on a list of great Americans from which students could pick individuals to learn about but specifically decided not to mention he was black for fear of raising racial issues. In the best of all worlds, there would be no need to make such mention, because children would have no preconceptions that famous people are generally white. However, in a school where one white child was surprised to learn from a member of our research team that Martin Luther King was black, not white[!], it would seem reasonable to argue that highlighting the accomplishments of black Americans and making sure that students do not assume famous figures are white is a reasonable practice. (Schofield, 1986, p. 249)

Certainly such conduct creates possibilities for serious miscommunication. There is significant evidence of cultural differences between White and Blacks. Although the relative contributions of race and class to these differences remain in dispute and wide variations within groups occur, few doubt that race plays a substantial, independent role (Jones, 1986). Thomas Kochman has suggested a number of ways in which modes and styles of communication differ widely between inner-city Blacks and middle class Whites (Kochman, 1981), producing substantial misunderstanding when forms of argumentation and presentations of self are misread. An ethnographic study by Shirley Brice Heath notes significant differences in the kinds and number of questions that Black and White children are asked at home. When White teachers, unaware of such differences, ask questions in a way that conforms to White middle-class practice, they unwittingly disadvantage Black school children (Heath, 1982).

But the problem runs deeper than the level of miscommunication. White believe that they can act in a colorblind fashion merely by acting as they always have. Colorblindness puts the burden on Blacks to change; to receive "equal" treatment, they must be seen by Whites as "White" (Baldwin, 1962, p. 127). Hence, the "compliment" that some Whites pay to Blacks: "I don't think of you as Black" (Lawrence, 1987, p. 318). Colorblindness is, in essence, not the absence of color, but rather monochromatism: Whites can be colorblind when there is only one race—when Blacks become White.

Local Knowledge: Race-Consciousness as Cultural Critique

Strong colorblindness, I have argued, is unlikely to produce the result it promises—a world in which race does not matter. In this section, I want to make the case for race-consciousness more direct by focusing on the benefits of race-consciousness in undermining and shifting deep cultural assumptions and ultimately, perhaps, making progress in overcoming racism. In presenting these claims, I hope also to undermine the case for weak colorblindness. To be effective, strategies for attacking racism may well demand affirmative race-conscious governmental policies.

Clifford Geertz, in a collection of his essays entitled *Local Knowledge*, has stated that:

> To see ourselves as others see us can be eye-opening. To see others as sharing a nature with ourselves is the merest decency. But it is far the far more difficult achievement of seeing ourselves amongst others, as a local example of the forms human life has locally taken, a case among cases, a world among worlds, that the largeness of mind, without which objectivity is self-congratulation and tolerance a sham, comes. (1983, p. 16)

Colorblindness operates at Geertz's level of "merest decency." It begins and ends with the observation that there is something, under the skin, common to all human beings. I do not want to discount the deep humanism underlying this perspective. Indeed, it is a significant improvement over the racist ideologies that have been prevalent throughout United States history and that have denied the "inner" equality of the races. But

Geertz clearly seeks more than this; he would reorient the usual hierarchical relationship between dominant and subordinate cultures by rotating the axis through its center point, making the vertical horizontal. This shift requires two related transformations: the first is to appreciate the contingency, the nonuniversalism of one own's culture—to view it as an example of "local knowledge"; the second is to recognize and credit the "local knowledges" of other groups. Of course, these two efforts are related. By valorizing the dominated, one is likely to cast doubts on the dominant group's characterizations or definition of the dominated group, which, in turn, tells us something new about the dominant group as well.

My claim outlined in the pages that follow is that race-consciousness can aid in these cultural transformations. This is, to be sure, hardly a new claim. The calls for "Black pride" and "Black power" in the 1960s represented a reorienting demand of race-consciousness. Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton's manifesto put it this way:

> [W]hile color blindness *may* be a sound goal ultimately, we must realize that race is an overwhelming fact of life in this historical period. There is no black man in this country who can live "simply as a man." His blackness is an ever-present fact of this racist society, whether he recognizes it or not. . . .
>
> "Integration" as a goal today speaks to the problem of blackness not only in an unrealistic way but also in a despicable way. It is based on complete acceptance of the fact that in order to have a decent house or education, black people must move into a white neighborhood or send their children to a white school. This reinforces, among both black and white, the idea that "white" is automatically superior and "black" is by definition inferior. . . .
>
> "Integration" also means that black people must give up their identity, deny their heritage. . . . The fact is that integration, as traditionally articulated, would abolish the black community. . . .
>
> The racial and cultural personality of the black community must be preserved and that community must win its freedom while preserving its cultural integrity. Integrity includes a pride—in the sense of self-acceptance, not chauvinism—in being black, in the historical attainments and contributions of black people. (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967, pp. 54–55)

The consequences wrought by the race-conscious advocates were startling. They were able to take the term "Black"—which for more than three hundred years had symbolized degradation and stigma—and turn it into an assertion of a group's humanity and solidarity. But African American self-pride does not necessarily penetrate White cultural norms and narratives. Indeed, a dominant culture can be relatively unconcerned with a subordinate group's definition of itself if that definition either does not get air time or can be dismissed as romantic, self-serving, or fictional.

Rotating the axis helps us to be open to other accounts and perspectives, and in doing so it reminds us of the fictional or constructed nature of "local knowledges"—including our own. Once White Americans shed the false assumptions that "they know all they need to know" about African-Americans, they will begin to learn as much about themselves as about others.

Understanding Domination

> The American Negro has the great advantage of having never believed that collection of myths to which white Americans cling. . . . (Baldwin, 1962, p. 136)

"[T]he quickest way to bring the reason of the world face to face [with white racism]," DuBois wrote, "is to listen to the complaint of those human beings today who are suffering most from White attitudes, from White habits, from the conscious and unconscious wrongs which White folk are today inflicting on their victims" (1940, p. 172). DuBois's suggestion is a persistent theme in recent nonmajority scholarship. Mari Matsuda, in her sympathetic critique of the Critical Legal Studies movement, has urged legal scholars to "look to the bottom" to discover the "distinct normative insights" of "victims of racial oppression" (1987, p. 326). Catharine MacKinnon has argued that "the standpoint from which legal method has been designed and injuries have been defined . . . has not been women's standpoint"; when one "[d]efin[es] feminism in a way that connects epistemology with power as the politics of women's point of view," a "whole shadow world of previously invisible silent abuse has been discerned" (1987, p. 169).

The claim here is limited, but important. One need not believe that subordinated groups hold world views thoroughly differentiated from the dominant culture in order to give credit to the claim that the views of subordinated groups on the extent and nature of subordination are likely to differ from those of majority groups. This is so for a number of reasons.

Dominant groups may have neither the inclination nor the ability to be fully aware of their domination. Dominant groups generally do not consider themselves to be oppressive, particularly in a society in which tolerance for diversity is valued, and they can provide descriptions of themselves and the disadvantaged that explain inequality as either justified or natural. To the extent that these descriptions effectively absolve dominant groups of responsibility for inequality, and therefore from bearing any of the costs of ameliorating inequality, there is little motivation for the dominant culture to question them.

Furthermore, the dominant culture's conceptions of the dominated are often not explicit. They are likely to be rooted, as DuBois notes, in "long followed habits, customs, and folkways; [in] subconscious trains of reasoning and unconscious nervous reflexes" (1940, p. 172). These assumptions and mental structures, as noted above, may well have a significant influence on conduct and attitudes, yet they are rarely subjected to careful scrutiny because they seem so natural, so much a part of us (Fredrickson, 1971).

Finally, since dominant groups are not the direct victims of their acts toward dominated groups, they may underestimate the burdens suffered by the dominated groups. This problem is compounded if dominant and dominated groups inhabit separate geographical and social spaces, so that the extent and harms of domination remain largely hidden from the dominant groups.

For these reasons, accounts of domination by those outside the dominant culture ought to be seen as an important check on what the dominant culture thinks it knows. To be sure, such "outsider" accounts should be subjected to critical scrutiny. Every group will have reasons for constructing narratives that reflect well on it and poorly on its perceived oppressors. Furthermore, the power of a dominant culture may well reside in large part in its ability to convince subordinated groups that the stories told about them are true (MacKinnon, 1987). But if these kinds of reasons are viewed as sufficient cause for not privileging Black accounts of domination, then they should also be seen as undermining the claims of objectivity and neutrality that are usually accorded White accounts.

Unfortunately, however, accounts of domination by the dominated are often discounted because the dominated are seen as having a self-interested motive in exaggerating the degree of harm. Scholarship done by minority scholars on minority issues is frequently greeted with skepticism from majority members of the academy. María de la Luz Reyes and John Halcón write that,

> [t]he assumption is that minority researchers cannot be objective in their analyses of those problems which are so close to their life experiences. . . . White-on-White research is accorded legitimacy, but "brown-on-brown" research is questioned and challenged at the same time many White social scientists are establishing their professional careers as experts on minority issues. (1988, p. 307)

As George Fredrickson has shown (with detail and insight painful to the reader), the image of Blacks in the White mind has historically been what Whites needed to tell themselves in order to justify racial oppression and inequality (Fredrickson, 1988; Fredrickson, 1971). Such justificatory schemes—particularly ones that support the continued existence of great inequality—should be constantly subjected to re-evaluation. Nonmajority perspectives have an important role to play in the uncovering and critiquing of the dominant culture's assumptions and explanations about domination.

Understanding the Dominant

The recognition of a nonmajority presence may also provide important perspectives on matters not generally associated with race. This point has been made persuasively by scholars interested in the relationship of law and literature. James Boyd White has argued that:

> [r]reading texts composed by other minds in other worlds can help us see more clearly (what is otherwise nearly invisible) the force and meaning of the habits of mind and language in which we have been brought up, as lawyers and as people, and to which we shall in all likelihood remain unconscious unless led to perceive or imagine other worlds. (1989, pp. 20–23)

Whites use the world "invisible" to describe the reader's implicit assumptions. But there is another kind of invisibility as well, one that has denied the presence of Blacks and the issue of race in American history and culture. Toni Morrison has urged a re-examination and reinterpretation of the America literary canon for "the ghost in the machine": "the ways in which the presence of African-Americans has shaped the choices, the language, the structure—the meaning of so much American literature" (1989, p. 11). She demonstrates her claim by offering a powerful reinterpretation of *Moby Dick* that sees a critique of "Whiteness as ideology" as central to the novel (Morrison, 1989, p. 16).

I will leave to literary critics the task of evaluating Morrison's analysis. But there is ample evidence of "unspeakable things unspoken" in the texts of constitutional law. In most constitutional law casebooks, for example, the commerce power provides the major vehicle for the examination of the nature and scope of federal legislative authority. The canon includes several cases from the pre-Civil War era from which modern constitutional understandings are said to trace. Yet a number of leading texts make no mention of the fact that crucial to the early conflict over the scope of the commerce power was the explosive question of Congress's power to regulate the internal slave trade. This recognition immediately puts the constitutional debate in a different light; and it helps establish linkages between the nationalist opinions of Chief Justice Marshall in *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) and Justice Story in *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* (1842), in which exclusive federal powers are asserted in an attempt to prevent interstate rivalries that could threaten the Union.

Recognizing the Dominated

Finally, recognizing race validates the lives and experiences of those who have been burdened because of their race. White racism has made "Blackness" a relevant category in our society. Yet colorblindness seeks to deny the continued social significance of the category, to tell Blacks that they are no different from Whites, even though Blacks as Blacks are persistently made to feel that difference. Color-consciousness allows for recognition of the distinct and difficult difference that race has made; it facilitates White awareness of the efforts of African Americans to describe and examine that difference. This is not simply the telling of a story of oppression. Color-consciousness makes Blacks subjects and not objects, undermining the durability of White definitions of "Blackness." It permits recognition of the strength and adaptive power of a Black community able to survive slavery and oppression; and it acknowledges the contributions of Black culture—not simply as windows on "the race question" but as distinct (if varied) voices and traditions, worthy of study in their own right.

It is difficult to improve upon Adrienne Rich's insight:

> I used to envy the "colorblindness" which some liberal, enlightened, white people were supposed to possess; raised as I was, where I was, I am and will to the end of my life be acutely, sometimes bitterly, aware of color. Every adult around me in my childhood, white or black, was aware of it; it was a sovereign consciousness, a hushed and compelling secret. But I no longer believe that "colorblindness"—if it even exists—is the opposite of racism; I think it is, in this world, a form of naiveté and moral stupidity. It implies that I would look at a black woman and see her as white, thus engaging in white solipsism to the utter erasure of her particular reality. (1979, p. 300)

Here is the turn of the axis, the recognition of others that helps one to see one's own culture as "a world among worlds."

Weak Colorblindness and Its Costs

It is common for advocates of affirmative action to point out that a legal strategy dedicated to "equality of opportunity" is likely to replicate deeply imbedded inequalities. The familiar metaphor is of a race between two runners, one of whom starts many yards back from the starting line, or is encumbered by ankle weights. Color-conscious policies are said to remove the advantage that has for several centuries been granted to Whites. The simplicity of this argument should not disguise its soundness or moral power (Abram, 1986). Unfortunately, however, affirmative action programs based on the objective of overcoming past societal discrimination are deemed to run afoul of the Court's model of weak colorblindness (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989; *Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education*, 1986). To the extent race conscious policies help ameliorate material disadvantage due to societal discrimination, the negative injunction of weak colorblindness imposes heavy costs.

Beyond this familiar terrain in the affirmative action debate, there are other advantages to race-conscious programs that also call into question the adequacy of weak colorblindness. As Justice Stevens has noted, there are a number of situations in which it seems eminently reasonable for government decision makers to take race into account. For example:

> in a city with a recent history of racial unrest, the superintendent of police might reasonably conclude that an integrated police force could develop a better relationship with the community and thereby do a more effective job of maintaining law and order than a force composed only of white officers. (*Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education*, 1986, p. 314)

Similar claims could be made about integrated civil service and school administrations. That situations exist that could benefit from race-conscious policies should hardly be surprising, given the prominent role that race has played in allocating benefits and burdens throughout American history. Indeed, Justice Powell's famous "diversity" argument in *Bakke* (1978) implicitly acknowledges the reasonableness of some manner of color-conscious decision making in a world in which race has mattered and continues to matter. To the extent that weak colorblindness makes these forms of race-consciousness problematic, it is simply nearsighted social policy.

Most fundamentally, weak colorblindness sacrifices much of the cultural critique that race-consciousness can provide. If the task is to subject dominant views to scrutiny and challenge through the investigation and acceptance of nondominant perspectives, then it would appear sensible to permit decision makers to adopt facilitative programs that necessarily take notice of race. *Metro Broadcasting* (1990) is a significant case in this respect. The FCC policies upheld in this case are important not only because they channel economic resources—broadcasting licenses—to African Americans, but also because these resources both support minority cultural self-definition and provide a means for penetrating mainstream culture. As the Court recognized, "[T]he benefits of [increased] diversity are not limited to the members of minority groups who gain access to the broadcasting industry by virtue of the ownership policies; rather, the benefits redound to all members of the viewing and listening audience" (*City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, 1989, pp. 3010–11).

The explicitly race-conscious goal of promoting broadcasting diversity sends a very different message than would alternative policies justified in terms of remedying past discrimination against minorities. Take, for example, a policy mentioned by Justice Scalia in his *Croson* opinion that gives preference not to racial groups per se but rather to "the disadvantaged." It may well be true, as Scalia suggests, that Blacks would disproportionately benefit from such a program. But to the extent that the policy is characterized as "remedial," it maintains the standard (White) broadcaster as the norm to which benefitted minority applicants cannot measure up without the FCC's "loosening" of standards. The policy in *Metro Broadcasting,* however, rotates the axis, not measuring the nonmajority applicant's deviation from or congruence to the standard (White) broadcaster, but rather viewing minority owners as equal contributors to an integrated broadcasting spectrum.

To return to a previous example, universities need more than African American literature classes; they need a diversity of students in all literature classes, and not simply to show White students that students of color can perform as well as White students, but also to help all students become more self-conscious of the underlying assumptions with which they approach the world. To be sure, there are risks. Given the power of imbedded ways of thinking, new information may simply be "processed" in accordance with pre-existing views; or, White students may make the error of assuming that comments by Black students express "the" Black perspective. But to students and faculty open to a Geertzian moment, the intellectual rewards are enormous.

TWO OBJECTIONS TO RACE CONSCIOUSNESS

Two objections to race-conscious policies are frequently posed: the first suggests that such policies can actually increase racial stereotyping and intolerance; the second questions the "essentialist" underpinnings of the case for race-consciousness presented here.

The first objection, one that figures prominently in the attack on affirmative action, is that race-consciousness is self-defeating to the extent that it reinforces rather than undermines racism (*Metro Broadcasting,* 1990). Affirmative action, it is argued, may have this effect because it inevitably creates the impression of a lowering of standards in order to benefit minorities. Furthermore, as Shelby Steele argues, the "implication of inferiority in racial preferences" has a demoralizing effect on Blacks, contributing to "an enlargement of self doubt" (1990, pp. 116–117).

One response is that we ought to run this claim by those who have been the victims of racism. Despite assertions by Whites that race-conscious programs "stigmatize" beneficiaries, Blacks remain overwhelmingly in favor of affirmative action. Would we not expect Blacks to be the first to recognize such harms and therefore to oppose affirmative action if it produced serious stigmatic injury? It might be argued, however, that individual Blacks are willing to participate in affirmative action programs because of the direct benefits they receive, yet those Blacks who are not beneficiaries suffer the stigmatic harm without the compensating gains. But, again, one would expect that if this were the case, then Blacks as a class would oppose affirmative action since the vast majority of Blacks are not beneficiaries of affirmative action. Furthermore, Randall Kennedy provides a convincing argument that affirmative action, on balance, is more likely to reduce stigmata than to impose it:

> It is unrealistic to think ... that affirmative action causes most white disparagement of the abilities of Blacks. Such disparagement, buttressed for decades by the rigid exclusion of Blacks from educational and employment opportunities, is precisely what engendered the explosive crisis to which affirmative action is a response.... In the end, the uncertain extent to which affirmative action diminishes the accomplishments of Blacks must be balanced against the stigmatization that occurs when Blacks are virtually absent from important institutions in the society. (Kennedy, 1986, p. 1331)

Confident measures of the costs and benefits of affirmative action do not exist. Given the material gains afforded minorities by race-conscious programs and the fact that these gains are likely, as Kennedy notes, to counteract "conventional stereotypes about the place of the Negro" (1986, p. 1331), I would put the burden of proof on those who claim that affirmative action contributes more to racism than it diminishes racism. Significantly, the case for race-consciousness suggested here would affect the evaluation of the costs and benefits because it would count as one of the benefits—as colorblindness cannot—the gains to White society of increased association with minorities and greater awareness of nondominant cultures. Thus, in *Wygant*, in which the Court invalidated a lay-off plan that provided for the discharge of White teachers with greater seniority than Black teachers who were not discharged *Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education*, 1986), a color-conscious analysis would recognize the benefits accruing to White students from a program that increases (or preserves) the number of nonmajority faculty.

The second challenge argues that building a case for color consciousness on, in part, notions of "subordinated cultures" runs the risk of repeating the objectification of minorities that such an approach strives to undermine. According to this view, support for race-conscious measures must be based on an implicit or explicit foundational claim that something unites all members of each race and that races may be differentiated on the basis of these common elements of identity or culture. This "essentialist" description (Harris, 1990) is seen as deeply troubling because, as Randall Kennedy has argued (in the context of legal academic scholarship), it "homogenize[s] the experience of persons of color and ... minimize[s] the heterogeneity of opinions held and articulated by persons of color" (1986, p. 1782). Kennedy adds:

> [R]acial groups are not monolithic and ... social divisions generate differences in interests and consciousness within racial groups. [The assertion that victims of racial oppression share a distinct experiential commonality] wraps in one garment of racial victimization the black law professor of middle-class upbringing with a salary of $65,000 and the black, unemployed, uneducated captive of the ghetto. In the overwhelming majority of cases, however, these two social types will inhabit radically dissimilar social universes. . . . Even during the eras of slavery and de jure segregation, the structure and experience of racial oppression often varied along class lines *within* black communities. There are, moreover, other important cross-cutting variables ... that diversify the experiences of persons of color, including gender, region, and differing group affiliations within the catch-all category "people of color." (1986, pp. 1782–1782)

Thus, race-conscious measures, to the extent that they are based on assertions that Blacks bring a distinctive "voice" to the academy, may be as objectifying, as demeaning, as the oppressive racial views of difference that colorblindness was constructed to combat. To credentialize race is to make every Black a representative of all Blacks, to oversimplify the richness and diversity of the Black community into "a Black perspective" (Kennedy, 1986).

Kennedy's description of the complexity of racial experience in the United States is surely correct. Furthermore, the claim that there is a distinctive Black voice seems to ignore the fact that majority and nonmajority cultures have been forged together, each influencing and responding to the other (Clifford, 1988; Ross, 1989). But it is far from clear that Kennedy's insights—or similar "postmodern" claims about the fluidity and open-ended nature of culture—provide strong support for colorblindness.

Kennedy's attack on "race credentializing" is an argument against hiring a nonmajority person for an academic position upon the belief that the person will or should provide "*the*" nonmajority perspective. But I do not understand him to deny the central claims of this section: that dominant White society would come to understand itself better by seeing itself through the eyes of a diverse range of nonmajority members of society and that respect for nonmajority members must be based on an understanding and appreciation of their lives as nonmajority members. To say that the Black community is pluralistic is, to my mind, to demand greater attention to such diversity, to see the number of ways in which members of nonmajority groups have attempted to mediate oppression in their lives. Indeed, for Whites to understand the diversity of the Black community is simply to accord to nonmajority groups the same nonreductionist respect majority groups accord to themselves (Kennedy, 1990). But it is precisely that appreciation that colorblindness denigrates; one may only approach another as "an individual," for whom race is an irrelevant factor in his or her experience and identity. Of course, how one's race has had such an influence will vary according to all sorts of other factors. But this hardly denies that race has had an influence.

Furthermore, to reject "essentialism" is not to deny the significance of the color line in American life. It was precisely this issue that the Court faced in *Metro Broadcasting*. The dissents asserted that the FCC's assumption that increasing minority ownership of television and radio stations would create greater diversity in programming was based "on the demeaning notion that members of the defined racial groups ascribe to certain 'minority views' that must be different from those of other citizens" (*Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC*, 1990, p. 3046) and "impermissibly equat[ed] race with thoughts and behavior" (*Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC*, 1990, p. 3036). But Justice Brennan's response to these claims is plainly more accurate:

> While we are under no illusion that members of a particular minority group share some cohesive, collective viewpoint, we believe it a legitimate inference for Congress and the Commission to draw that as more minorities gain ownership and policymaking roles in the media, varying perspectives will be more fairly represented on the airwaves. (*Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC*, 1990, p. 3018)

To sustain the claim that a race-based investigation is intellectually unwarranted, one would have to show that there is no reason to believe that the experiences of members of racial minorities in this nation have not, to some extent, diverged from the experiences of Whites. I simply find this an implausible suggestion, given a three hundred year social history of having so much turn on one's racial identification. Is it conceivable that the meaning of race and American racism has been the same for Whites and Blacks, or that a maddeningly resilient social and geographical separation of the races has not produced race-based experiential differences?

CONCLUSION: TOWARD AN INCLUSIVE AMERICAN STORY

In the current political and social climate, a call for color-consciousness poses real risks. For several centuries of American history, noticing race provided the basis for a caste system that institutionalized second-class status for people of color. It was precisely this oppressive use of race that colorblindness sought to overcome. Furthermore, central to White opposition to affirmative action is the belief that Blacks have attained equality of opportunity, and therefore any assistance directed to minorities qua minorities affords them an underserved benefit and unfair advantage (Kluegel & Smith, 1982).

Perhaps these considerations suggest that it would be politically wise, much as the Supreme Court suggested in *Croson*, for civil rights advocates to turn their attentions toward race-neutral goals. It may be time, some might reasonably suggest, to reinitiate the struggle, abandoned in the 1970's, for a recognition of the constitutional status of "fundamental rights" such as housing, jobs, medical care, and a decent education that a just society ought to provide to its members. Although this prong of the civil rights movement withered when the Supreme Court made clear that it would not read the Constitution to require that governments provide certain minimal levels of support to those is need, and there is little chance that the current Court will retreat from this position, it is possible that a Democratically dominated Congress-well aware of the disastrous impact that the policies of the Reagan Administration had on the least advantaged members of our society—might be moved to increase support for social programs.

I do not claim to be a savvy political analyst and would not predict the chances of success for such a strategy. But I wish to identify several important issues with which a race-neutral civil rights program must come to grips. A "fundamental rights" approach will not get at the underlying assumptions and structures of thought that support second-class status for Blacks in this society. It will not change the American belief that all it takes to make it in this society is hard work, and that those who do not make it fail because of their own character (or cultural) flaws. And it may, in fact, reinforce stereotypes to the extent that minority members are overrepresented in programs directed at the disadvantaged.

Race-neutral strategies simply postpone our society's inevitable rendezvous with its history of racism. Constant liminal and subliminal messages of the difference that race makes take their toll—no matter what justificatory rhetoric enshrouds official governmental action—and will ultimately breed a powerful claim of enough-is-enough. Such a call can take the form of a national commitment to end racial injustice, or it can take the form of "by any means necessary"[3] in the minds and hands of the victims of discrimination who know that colorblindness is a descriptive lie and a normative mistake.

Race-conscious programs alone will not end racism. At best, they represent a small step toward changing social relations and structures of thought and perception. What is needed is direct, self-conscious scrutiny of the way we think and of the assumptions about race that each of us holds and upon which we act. Attention to Black constructions of reality can provide a counterbalance to the White construction of Blacks in the White mind.

The walls that separate Whites from Blacks are based on more than ignorance, myth, and fear. Despite American myths about "one nation, indivisible" and "e pluribus unum.," Blacks remain strangers in the land, identified by a skin color that is still a badge of otherness.[4] In reflecting on his life in his autobiography, W.E.B. DuBois wrote, "I was not an American;. . . I was by long education and continual compulsion and daily reminder, a colored man in a White world" (1940, p. 135).

How can Blacks living in the United States not "be Americans"? Historical facts are clearly to the contrary. With the virtual closing of the slave trade at the time of the American Revolution, the ancestors of most Black Americans came to this country in colonial times, long before the waves of immigration that brought the Irish, the Jews, and Eastern and Southern Europeans to America. African-Americans were present at the creation; their forced labor, ended only by civil war, was a crucial component in the construction of the American economy. Black soldiers have fought and died in every American war—and in recent wars, in disproportionate number. Given this history, one would think it reasonable for Blacks to be seen as integral to the American story.

But one can be *in* a nation, and still not be *of* that nation. Writing of Jews in France, Jean-Paul Sartre noted that despite years of residence and significant economic and cultural achievements, Jews remain "the unassimilated at the very heart of [French] society":

> [The Jew] accepts the society around him, he joins the game and he conforms to all the ceremonies, dancing with the others the dance of respectability. Besides, he is nobody's slave; he is a free citizen under a regime that allows free competition; he is forbidden no social dignity, no office of the state. He may be decorated with the ribbon of the Legion of Honor, he may become a great lawyer or a cabinet minister. But at the very moment when he reaches the summits of legal society, another society—amorphous, diffused, and omnipresent—appears before him as if in brief flashes of lightning and refuses to take him in. . . . [H]e never encounters any particular resistance; people seem, rather, to be in flight before him; an impalable chasm widens out, and, above all, an invisible chemistry devaluates all he touches.
>
> . . .Everything is accessible to him, and yet he possesses nothing; for, he is told, what one possesses is not to be bought. (1948, p. 83)

As Frantz Fanon has pointed out, the situation of Blacks in a White society is analogous, but worse. "[T]he Jew can be known in his Jewishness. . .. His actions, his behavior is the final determinant. He is a White man, and . . . can sometimes go unnoticed." But as a Black, Fanon is "given no chance": "I am the slave not of the 'idea' that others have of me but of my own appearance" (1967, pp. 115–116).

The claim that one can penetrate to the core and still be an outsider is a statement about culture and about a society's self-conception. It means that even after we end all the forms of physical exclusion (slavery, lynching, Jim Crow, housing, and employment discrimination), and after we discredit all the justifications for subordination (bestiality, genetic inferiority, and cultural depravity), there may still be another kind of exclusion that ultimately makes Blacks the "unassimilated at the very heart of American society." It is the story that America tells about itself that keeps Blacks in the position of outsiders.

The crudest version is that America is a White man's country. While it can hardly be denied that there are White Americans who continue to believe this, I think there is a more genteel version that better describes the complex ways in which this society has included some and excluded others. This version portrays America's story as the immigrant's story. True to our individualistic orientation, the predominant myth America tells about Americans is the story of *those who chose* (because of political, religious, or economic persecution) to come to this country.

One would think that a "nation of immigrants" would be open to a humanitarian pluralism, and therefore expanding the immigrant tale to include all previously excluded groups would be a simple task. But the invitation that the Statue of Liberty holds in her hand does not read "come as you are." It has always been an offer to join us on our terms. The immigrant story is one of assimilation, not multi-culturalism.

African-Americans do not fit either aspect of the immigrant account. The vast majority of those who came to America did not do so voluntarily; they arrived not on immigrant ships, but on slave ships. Nor were Blacks thought to be candidates for assimilation. Indeed, when the ingenious American devices for excluding Blacks from society are contrasted with the assimilationist welcome accorded immigrants, one can quickly begin to formulate a sensible answer to the question that lies deep in many White minds: why can't Blacks do what my immigrant ancestors did?

Racial equality will not be attainable until American myths include Blacks as full members and equal partners in society.[5] A new set of stories is needed to provide the impetus for self and social re-examination, and to provide the foundation upon which support for race-conscious measures can be based. For example, we might develop an historical narrative not about those who *chose* America, but rather about those who *built* America. This account would be about slaves and free Blacks in the South in the nineteenth century and Blacks in the twentieth century who migrated to work in Northern factories; about women who worked in the factories and (unnoticed and uncompensated) in the home; and about Chinese laborers who built the railroads, Mexican workers who harvested the crops, and European immigrants who built the great cities of the East. Such a narrative would acknowledge the deep and lasting contributions of African-Americans and other groups usually marginalized in the traditional account and would focus attention on the injustice of continued inequalities founded on racial oppression.

Blacks as Blacks have had an unique history in this country. It is a history that Whites and Blacks confront every day and will continue to confront into the indefinite future. In pretending to ignore race, this society denies itself the self-knowledge that is demanded for eradicating racism and achieving racial justice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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NOTES

1. Statement of Policy on Minority Ownership of Broadcasting Facilities, quoted in *Metro Broadcasting Inc v. FCC*, 110 *S.Ct.* 2997, 3004, 1990.
2. W.E.B. DuBois recognized this problem almost a century ago:

   > "The American Negro has always felt an intense personal interest in discussions as to the origins and destinies of races: primarily because back of most discussions of race with which he is familiar, have lurked certain assumptions as to his natural abilities, as to his political, intellectual and moral status, which he felt were wrong. He has, consequently, been led to deprecate and minimize race distinctions, to believe intensely that out of one blood God created all nations, and to speak of human brotherhood as though it were the possibility of an already dawning to-morrow."

   Although he expressly rejected the claim, DuBois reported that many thought that: "our sole hope of salvation lies in our being able to lose our race identity in the commingled blood of the nation; and that any other course would merely increase the friction of races which we call race prejudice, and against which we have so long and so earnestly fought. (W.E.B. DuBois, (1897), The Conservation of the Races 5, p. 10. (as quoted in Aleinikoff, A., (1991) A Case for Race Consciousness, *Columbia Law Review*, 91, pp. 1076–1077.

3. The famous phrase of Malcolm X, speech of December 20, 1964 at the Audubon Ballroom, Reprinted in *Malcolm X Speaks* 116, G. Breitman, ed., (1967), as cited in Aleinikoff, A., (1991). A Case for Race Consciousness, p. 1122. "Our objective is complete freedom, complete justice, complete equality, by any means necessary."

4. The most infamous rendering of this view is Chief Justice Taney's opinion in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* , U.S. (19 How). 393, (1856) as cited in Aleinikoff, A., (1991) p. 1122. Taney is propoerly castigated for his historical, legal and logical erors, but he may have been closer to the mark with his claim that many White Americans did not consider Blacks to be full members of the new nation.

5. It will require that Langston Hughes's celebrated poem be a statement of fact, rather than a dream:

I, Too

I, too, sing America
I am the darker brother

They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, am America

L. Hughes, (1959), *Selected Poems*, p.275, as cited in Aleinikoff, A. (1991), p. 1125.

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